‘I was about to be killed by a bear!’



How Alex Messenger survived a grizzly attack

→ G2

Zoe Williams What a speed awareness course is really like

→ G2



The Guardian

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Newspaper of the year

Thousands of hospital staff report claims of sexual abuse by patients

Exclusive Medics face ‘daily threat’ of physical and verbal assault at work

Anna Bawden
David Batty

Thousands of hospital staff are reporting claims of sexual assaults and harassment by patients, an investigation has found, prompting calls for ministers to address the “daily threat of abuse” faced by doctors and nurses.

More than 20,000 alleged incidents of sexual violence and sexual misconduct by patients on hospital staff were recorded in the five years to 2022 by 212 NHS trusts in England, freedom of information (FoI) requests by the Guardian and the British Medical Journal (BMJ) found.

The 20,928 cases accounted for just under 60% of the total alleged incidents trusts disclosed.

Allegations included rape, sexual assault, harassment, stalking and sexualised remarks. Experts cautioned that the figures were likely to be a serious underestimate because staff were often deterred from making complaints when patients abuse them.

Deeba Syed, a senior legal officer at the Rights of Women helpline, said: “Women tell us they are expected to continue to care for patients who are abusive or harassing without efforts to adequately safeguard them from further harassment.

“We hear worrying reports of women feeling pressured into not raising formal grievances and instead being transferred to different departments or locations.

“They tell us it is argued that this is more expedient than moving the harassing patient, despite victims feeling this is unsafe to others and a punishment on them.”

Katie, not her real name, a junior doctor in the south-east of England, said patients had made sexual comments about her since she was a student.

“From the word go within clinical placement, I always felt very heavily sexualised by patients,” she said. “One time, when I had to get close up to a patient’s face to examine his eyes, the patient started licking his lips and rubbing himself. I was 19 or 20 at the time and the consultant had left the room - I was completely terrified.”

She said she had also experienced sinister, crude comments, such as being asked if she was going to “pleasure” a male patient.

Katie said she did not feel she could tell anyone as she found most of the consultants intimidating. The everyday harassment 12 →

Top official ‘aware’ of Braverman allegations

Rajeev Syal
Pippa Crerar
Aubrey Allegretti

The most senior civil servant in the Home Office was made aware of allegations that Suella Braverman wanted help in dealing with a speeding fine, the Guardian understands.

The development raises questions about how many other senior officials and ministers across Whitehall were then informed about the claims and puts pressure on the prime minister to order an investigation.

Matthew Rycroft, the department’s permanent secretary, was told about the home secretary’s alleged request to set up a private driving awareness course in the autumn, informed sources said.

Braverman had made the request to another senior civil servant who “had concerns about whether it was appropriate”, it is understood, so had reported it to the top official. The home secretary insisted she had done “nothing untoward” as she battled to save her 6 →



PHOTOGRAPH: DANIEL COLE/AP

Alicia Vikander and Jude Law at a photo call for Firebrand at the Cannes film festival. Law has been praised for his portrayal of Henry VIII in the film about the king’s marriage to Catherine Parr. **News** *Page 11* →

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News



▼ *Keir Starmer launches the latest of his five 'missions' for government, to 'build an NHS fit for the future'*
PHOTOGRAPH: LEON NEAL/GETTY IMAGES

Labour would increase health service spending in England, says Starmer

Pippa Crerar
Aubrey Allegretti

Keir Starmer signalled yesterday that a Labour government would pump more funding into the NHS in England, as he outlined his plans to make the health service "fit for the future".

The Labour leader agreed that he was prepared to put his "money where your mouth is" on investing in the future of the health service.

Some Labour MPs are concerned that Starmer is too cautious over his spending plans for government, should he win the election. They argue that the health service will not be able to "get off its knees" without substantial investment and that the public would expect that.

Before a speech in Essex to launch the latest of his five "missions" for government, Starmer acknowledged that Labour would need to pour more money into the NHS. "So far as the money is concerned, firstly, wherever we have made a specific commitment we are setting out in terms today how we will pay for that," he told the BBC.

"But also I do want to emphasise, I ran a public service for five years, I do know that if you put more money in the top you do get a better outcome, so money is of course part of the answer, but we have also got to change and reform.

"And if we go down the path of prevention, that actually will be far better for people's lives and their health, but also actually in the long run cost a lot less."

He promised to set out a breakdown of Labour's funding plans for the NHS ahead of next year's election, depending on the state of the public finances at the time. "The exact amount we will put in we will set out nearer the election but yes, money is part of the answer. The NHS is always better funded under Labour."

> *'Money is of course part of the answer, but we've also got to change and reform'*
>
> **Keir Starmer**
> *Labour leader*

However, after his speech, Starmer sidestepped questions on exactly how the party would fund wide-ranging NHS reform longer term. He denied that he had not set out where the money would come from, highlighting that Labour has said it will pay for "the biggest workforce expansion in NHS history" by scrapping non-dom tax status, which could raise £3.2bn a year.

While there was little mention of Labour's social care plans, Starmer stressed they remained a priority. A review commissioned by the party from the Fabian Society last summer will report back next month on how a new "national care service" could be structured and funded, according to a spokesperson.

A Labour party source conceded that there were some details yet to be announced about the party's spending plans in the run-up to the next election – including on areas such as health – but stressed this was because "we don't know the full extent of the fiscal situation we're going to inherit".

In a bid to ramp up the salience of NHS reform, Starmer said the health service was "on its knees" and declared that "at the next election, the NHS is on the line".

He promised to ensure the health service meets targets that are currently being missed, including a seven-minute response time for cardiac arrests, four hours to be seen in A&E and planned treatment within 18 weeks.

Further aspirations – stemming the number of deaths by suicide and reducing heart attacks and strokes by a quarter – may not be achieved until the second term of a Labour government.

Although Starmer ruled out imposing a sugar tax to deter people from eating unhealthy food and contributing to growing problems with obesity, he was urged not to be deterred by fears of "nanny-statism".

Dr Aveek Bhattacharya, the research director of the Social Market Foundation, said Labour should be "more open to regulating the availability of unhealthy food and drink, minimum unit pricing of alcohol, and higher taxes".

NHS dentists at 'lowest level in a decade', contradicting PM claims

Daniel Boffey
Chief reporter

Rishi Sunak is under pressure over his claims about the state of dentistry as figures reveal that the number of active NHS dentists in England is at its lowest level in a decade, leaving millions of people struggling to get checkups or have toothaches fixed.

The British Dental Association (BDA) warned of an exodus of dentists from the NHS as it published figures showing the workforce has been reduced to a level not seen since 2012-13. Sunak has repeatedly said that 500 extra dentists had been recorded as providing NHS services in the 2021-22 financial year.

A growing number of dental surgeries do little or no NHS-funded work, with the BDA citing a £3bn dental budget that has failed to keep pace with inflation and population growth over the past decade.

A total of 23,577 dentists performed NHS work in the 2022-23 financial year, down 695 on the previous year, according to a response to a freedom of information request from the NHS Business Services Authority. That figure is more than 1,100 down on the pre-pandemic numbers.

The loss of dentists within the system has led to nearly 6 million adults failing to get an NHS dentist appointment in the past two years, according to a recent analysis by the BDA. The official figures on the NHS dentistry workforce appear to contradict the prime minister's claims that recent reforms have boosted numbers.

The BDA said it thought Sunak was relying on a rise in activity from dentists in the NHS in the financial year 2021-22 that had naturally followed the end of the Covid lockdown.

Shawn Charlwood, who chairs the BDA's dental practice committee, said: "Government needs to drop the spin, accept the facts, and provide a rescue package to keep this service afloat. NHS dentistry is haemorrhaging talent, and further tweaks to a broken system will not stem the flow.

"We face an access crisis, and with hundreds of millions set to be pulled away, funds must be put to work solving these problems."

> **6 million**
> *Patients who failed to get an NHS dental appointment in the past two years, according to BDA analysis*
>
> **50.3%**
> *Dentists who reduced the NHS work they did by more than a quarter since the start of Covid*

The BDA has been asking ministers to recycle money returned to the government by dentistry practices that have been unable to hit their contractual targets. It is estimated this could exceed £400m this year.

The fall in workforce numbers highlighted in the figures is also said by the BDA to underplay the full scale of lost capacity in NHS dentistry.

A recent BDA study revealed more than half of dentists (50.3%) in England had reduced their proportion of NHS work by more than a quarter since the start of the pandemic. And 74% indicated that they planned to reduce the amount of NHS work they undertake in the year ahead.

The NHS Business Services Authority did not immediately respond to a request for comment. A Department of Health and Social Care spokesperson said the latest figures might be lower than the previous year due to not all NHS dentists having submitted their data for the last financial year.

Orkney museum among five on UK prize shortlist

Harriet Sherwood
Kevin Rawlinson

A museum on a small island in Orkney that became the Royal Navy's nerve centre during the first and second world wars has been shortlisted for museum of the year.

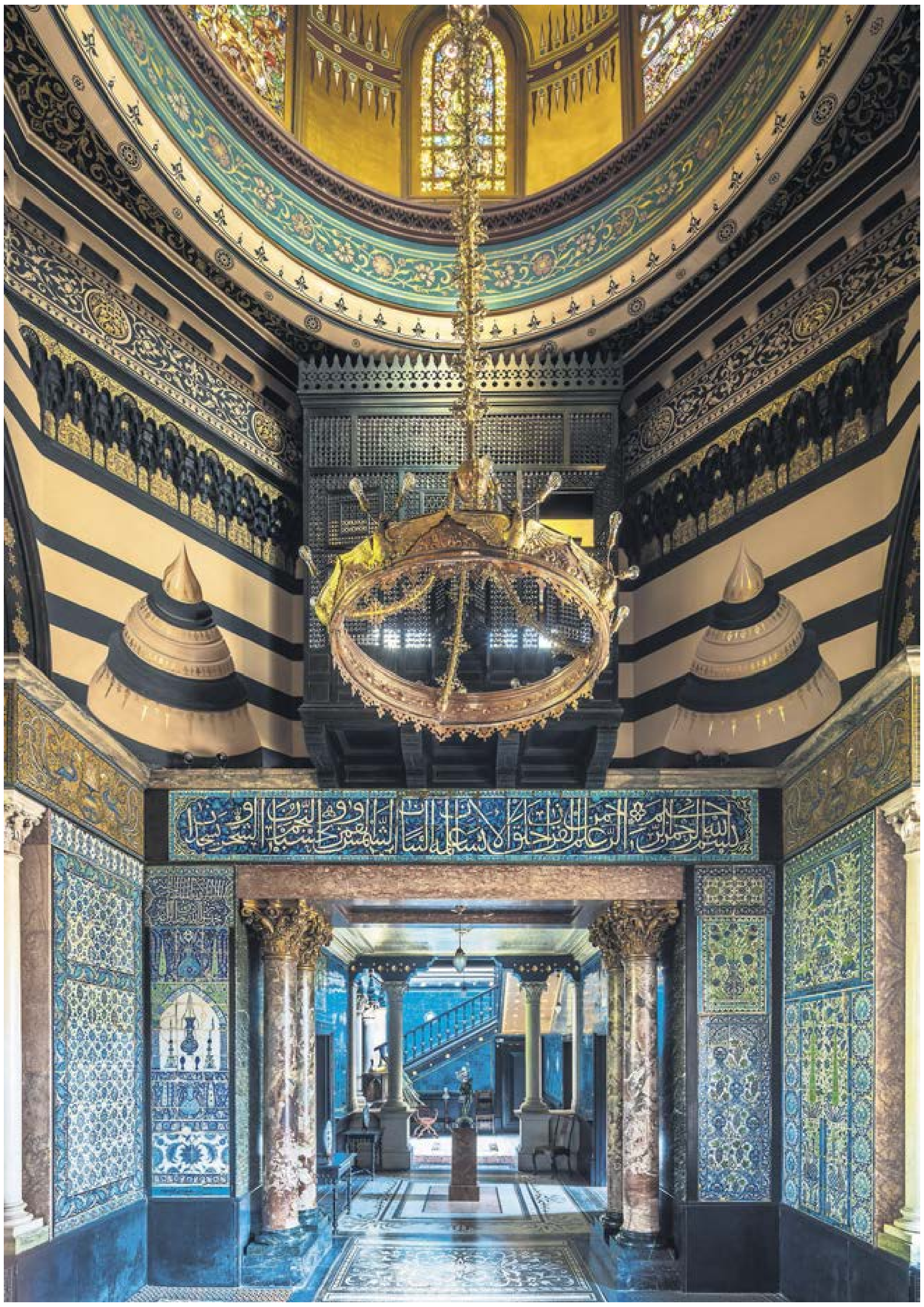
The Scapa Flow Museum tells the story of how the island of Hoy became essential to Britain's defence with the construction of a large naval base. It reopened last year after a £4.4m redevelopment.

The museum is one of five shortlisted for the UK award organised by the Art Fund charity. The others are the Burrell Collection in Glasgow, Leighton House in London, the MAC in Belfast and the Natural History Museum in London.

During the two world wars of the last century, thousands of people went to build and work on the naval base at Lyness on Hoy. The Scapa Flow Museum tells the stories of individuals as well charting events such as internment, and the scuttling and salvage of the German high seas fleet in 1919.

The redevelopment incorporated part of the base's infrastructure, the former fuel oil pumping station. The museum is a significant tourist attraction on the island, which has a permanent population of 400.

The finalists were "at the top of their game, offering inspirational collections and programmes for their communities, for visitors from across the UK and around the world", said Jenny Waldman, the director of Art Fund. "From transformational redevelopment to community involvement, to addressing the major issues of today, the shortlisted museums may operate at very different scales, but all show astonishing ambition and boundless creativity. Each is a blueprint for future innovation in museums."



▲ *The Arab Hall at Leighton House, the former home and studio of the Victorian artist Frederic Leighton*
PHOTOGRAPH: RBKC/DIRK LINDNER PHOTOGRAPHY

The Burrell Collection houses 9,000 objects collected by Sir William and Constance Burrell, including one of the UK's most significant holdings of Chinese art, some of the world's finest medieval stained glass and tapestries, and paintings by artists including Rembrandt and Degas.

It reopened to the public in Glasgow last March after a six-year refurbishment that cost £68m and was funded by Glasgow city council, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the Scottish and UK governments. The collection was originally donated to the City of Glasgow in 1944 on the proviso that it be housed in a rural setting.

Leighton House, in Kensington, west London, is the former studio and home of the leading Victorian artist Frederic Leighton, and has been a museum since 1900. Recently it has worked with contemporary artists to create works that resonate with the influences of the house, including furniture made by displaced Syrian artisans.

The MAC (Metropolitan Arts Centre), in Belfast's Cathedral Quarter, is Northern Ireland's leading arts centre, bringing major international artists to a local audience, while





▲ *Scapa Flow Museum (top), on the island of Hoy, in Orkney, and the MAC, in Belfast, are two of the shortlisted institutions that are said to be 'offering inspirational collections and programmes' and showing 'boundless creativity'*
PHOTOGRAPHS: JANIE AIREY/ART FUND

displaying the work of Northern Irish artists in an international context. Its MACtivate programme works with marginalised people, allowing the museum to reach beyond traditional arts audiences.

The best known museum on the Art Fund's shortlist is the most visited indoor attraction in the UK, as well as being a world-leading science research centre. The Natural History Museum's collections comprise more than 80m specimens, and its 350 scientists work on issues such as biodiversity loss and the sustainable extraction of natural resources.

The 2022 winner of the award was the Horniman Museum and Gardens in south London. This year's winner will be announced on 12 July and will receive £120,000, with £15,000 going to each of the other finalists.

Alongside Waldman, the panel also includes the artist Larry Achiampong, the historian and broadcaster Dame Mary Beard, as well as the author Abadesi Osunsade and Laura Pye, the director of National Museums Liverpool.

The judges will visit each of the finalists to inform their decision-making, while each museum will make the most of being shortlisted over the summer through events and activities for new and current visitors.

Pearce to make an 'appearance or two' in Neighbours revival

Sian Cain

Guy Pearce has confirmed that he will make an appearance in the upcoming Neighbours reboot after Amazon swooped in to revive the long-running Australian soap.

The LA Confidential and Memento star began playing Mike Young in 1986 and appeared in more than 400 episodes over three years. Along with Kylie Minogue, Jason Donovan and Margot Robbie, Pearce returned for what was thought to be the show's finale last July.

In the 90-minute episode, Mike was reunited with his former love interest Jane Harris, played by Annie Jones, with the pair buying a house on Ramsay Street.

Speaking on the Good Weekend Talks podcast, Pearce said: "Annie and I called each other – 'What do we do now, because we're living in the street?' And she said, 'Well I'm all right because I'm on the show anyway, but what are you going to do?' I said, 'I don't know.' So we're in the process of working it out.

"Obviously, if I'm going to extricate myself from the show, I want to do it respectfully. I wasn't just gonna go, 'Well, bad luck. You had your chance, that was it,' you know. So there may be a little appearance or two, shall we say."

The soap was due to finish after a 37-year run when the UK's Channel 5 decided to stop airing it. But three months later Fremantle announced that Neighbours would be revived, with Amazon onboard as new production partners. The move was based on the response to the finale, which attracted 1.2 million viewers in Australia and 3 million in the UK.



▲ *Guy Pearce played Mike Young in the long-running Australian soap*

Pearce had previously made some pointed comments about the show's surprise planned return, saying that Amazon's decision "makes our finale look like a rather expensive exercise" and suggesting Robbie could ask for the return of a crate of champagne that she had sent to the show's producers as a farewell thank-you present.

Another actor confirmed to appear in the Neighbours revival is Mischa Barton, with the former star of the US teen drama The OC set to play a "dynamic and unpredictable" character.

The new series of Neighbours will be available to view on Amazon Freevee in the UK when it returns in the second half of this year.

Facebook owner Meta fined £1bn for breach of EU rules on handling of user information

Dan Milmo
Lisa O'Carroll

Facebook's owner, Meta, has been fined a record €1.2bn (£1bn) and ordered to suspend the transfer of user data from the EU to the US.

The fine, imposed by Ireland's Data Protection Commission (DPC), which regulates Meta across the EU, is a record for a breach of the bloc's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The suspension of Facebook data transfers is not immediate and Meta has been given five months to implement it.

The DPC punishment relates to a legal challenge brought by an Austrian privacy campaigner, Max Schrems, over concerns resulting from the Edward Snowden revelations that European users' data is not sufficiently protected from US intelligence agencies when it is transferred across the Atlantic.

Meta has also been given six months to stop "the unlawful processing, including storage, in the US" of personal EU data already transferred across the Atlantic, meaning that user data will need to be removed from Facebook servers.

The ruling does not affect data transfers at Meta's other main platforms, Instagram and WhatsApp. Meta said it would appeal against the decision and seek a stay on the data transfer order.

The DPC said Meta infringed GDPR by continuing to transfer EU user data to the US without proper safeguards in place, despite a ruling by the European court of justice (CJEU) in 2020 requiring robust protection of that information. The CJEU ruled that data leaving the EU must have the same level of protection when it reaches its destination outside the EU as it would have under GDPR.

The regulator said data transferred by Facebook under a legal instrument called standard contractual clauses (SCCs) "did not address the risks to the fundamental rights and freedoms of data subjects that were identified by the [court of justice] in its judgment".

Meta, whose EU base is in Ireland, said it had been "singled out" by the DPC despite thousands of other businesses using the same data transfer processes.

"We are … disappointed to have been singled out when using the same legal mechanism as thousands of other companies looking to provide services in Europe," wrote Nick Clegg, the Meta president of global affairs, and Jennifer Newstead, the Meta chief legal officer, in a blog post yesterday.


▲ *The fine relates to a legal challenge by Max Schrems, a privacy activist*

They added: "This decision is flawed, unjustified and sets a dangerous precedent for the countless other companies transferring data between the EU and US." They said the internet risks being carved up into national and regional silos as a result.

A spokesperson for the European Commission, the EU's executive arm, said it hoped a new framework for transatlantic data transfers would be "fully functional by the summer", which would provide the "stability and legal certainty" sought by US tech companies.

£514bn
The value of Facebook's parent, Meta, based on its share price in trading at midday yesterday

Facebook would be able to resume data transfers under the new data regime, which has been agreed between Washington and Brussels at a political level but still requires agreement on implementation.

The spokesperson said it was "very clear" that the EU had worked with the US on putting "safeguards" protecting consumer data in place and it hoped to restore legal certainty.

The Meta blog said there would be "no immediate disruption" to Facebook's service in the EU because of the grace period announced by the DPC. However, in Meta's most recent quarterly results, the company said that without SCCs or "other alternative means of data transfers" it would "likely be unable to offer a number of our most significant products and services, including Facebook and Instagram, in Europe".

Meta reported net income, a US measure of profit, of $23.2bn last year. Shares in Meta were up 2.2% in midday trading yesterday, valuing the company at more than $640bn (£514bn).

The DPC said it had disagreed with other EU regulators over Meta's punishment, which resulted in the European Data Protection Board, comprising EU data watchdogs, stepping in to decide whether a fine should be imposed.

Eddie Powell, a data protection partner at the UK law firm Fladgate, said an appeal was unlikely to reverse all of the decision: "At the heart of the issue is the US government's ability under US law to access EU personal data held by US corporations on the grounds of national security, without any effective safeguard or checks."


▼ *Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Meta, and Nick Clegg (right), its head of global affairs, in Dublin in 2019*
PHOTOGRAPH: NIALL CARSON/PA WIRE

WhatsApp
Users will be able to edit just-sent messages

Dan Milmo
Global technology editor

WhatsApp has announced an editing feature to allow users to alter messages up to 15 minutes after they have been sent.

The Meta-owned messaging service has started rolling out the editing function globally and it should become available to all users in the coming weeks, the platform said in a blog post.

Messages that have been edited will have an "edited" notification displayed alongside them, although the edit history will not be shown so you cannot view what the post said before it was altered.

The feature can be activated by pressing down on a message and selecting "edit" from the pop-up menu that appears.

Previously, the only way to correct a message sent in haste or containing an error was to delete it and send a fresh one, with recipients alerted to the fact by the removed post being replaced with the phrase: "This message was deleted."

"From correcting a simple misspelling to adding extra context to a message, we're excited to bring you more control over your chats. All you need to do is long-press on a sent message and choose 'edit' from the menu for up to 15 minutes after," said WhatsApp.

Competing apps such as Telegram and Signal already allow users to edit messages, while Twitter rolled out the ability to edit tweets to select users last year. Twitter offers an editing feature to subscribers to its Twitter Blue service, giving them a 30-minute window to edit a tweet after it has been sent.

Meta's founder and chief executive, Mark Zuckerberg, flagged the WhatsApp change on his Facebook page, showing a message that had been changed from "Beast of luck!" to "Best of luck!"

The move comes around a decade after Facebook, also owned by Meta, started to allow the ability to edit posts and comments. Fellow Meta social media platform Instagram allows users to edit posts but not comments.

Meta is in dispute with the UK government about its best-known feature: end-to-end encryption, which ensures only the receiver and sender can view messages.

Last month WhatsApp and Signal signed an open letter claiming the online safety bill could undermine privacy and safety as the legislation "provides no explicit protection for encryption" because it could empower regulators to demand tech firms weaken encryption systems in order to tackle terrorism or child sexual abuse content.

'Tenacious to the end'
Cancer campaigner Laura Nuttall, 23, dies
Page 15

Naga Munchetty
Presenter reveals womb condition
Page 19





◀ *Portuguese authorities gather at a base camp in the Arade dam area yesterday, before a new search for Madeleine McCann (below)*
PHOTOGRAPH: LUIS FORRA/EPA

Portuguese police return to reservoir in new Madeleine McCann search



Jamie Grierson
Kate Connolly *Berlin*

An active search for Madeleine McCann is to be carried out for the first time in nearly a decade in a reservoir in Portugal, according to reports.

Police officers are to search Barragem do Arade reservoir near the town of Silves in the Algarve, according to German media, about 25 miles from Praia da Luz where Madeleine vanished aged three from her family's holiday apartment on 3 May 2007.

The search is to be conducted by Portuguese officers at the behest of German authorities. The public prosecutor's office in Braunschweig is investigating a convicted paedophile, Christian Brückner, 45.

The German newspaper Bild claims Brückner may have had friends in the area. The prosecutor's office is expected to issue a statement today, when the search of the reservoir and surrounding forest – likely to take two days – will begin in earnest.

Yesterday, a road leading to the 14-metre deep reservoir was blocked and police tents could be seen. The reservoir was reportedly searched in 2008 and bones found in a bag were judged to be of "non-human origin". It remains unclear why the police have now chosen to search again.

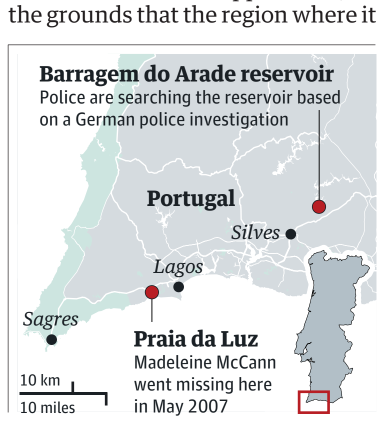
Images of Portuguese officers walking along dry tracks near the reservoir and sealing off areas with tape began emerging yesterday.

This will be the first major operation of its kind since June 2014, when the Metropolitan police received permission from Portuguese officials to search Praia da Luz with search dogs and ground-penetrating radar.

Kate and Gerry McCann were dining at a nearby tapas restaurant when Madeleine disappeared, triggering one of the most highly publicised missing person cases in UK history.

German police said in June 2020 that the girl was assumed dead and Brückner was probably responsible for her disappearance. He has not been charged with any offences connected with Madeleine's disappearance, and has denied any involvement. However, the Met police continue to treat it as a missing person case under Operation Grange, the multimillion-pound investigation into Madeleine's disappearance. The Met referred all media inquiries to German authorities.

Brückner is currently in a German prison serving a sentence for rape. Last month, a German court said it was cancelling a sexual offences trial against Brückner on charges unrelated to McCann's disappearance, on the grounds that the region where it is located is not the last place he lived in Germany.



He was charged last year by German prosecutors in Braunschweig with three offences of aggravated rape of women and two offences of sexual abuse of children. The alleged offences took place in Portugal between December 2000 and July 2017. They are not linked to Madeleine's disappearance.

Earlier this month, the McCanns issued a short statement on their Find Madeleine campaign website to mark the 16th anniversary of her disappearance. "Today marks the 16th anniversary of Madeleine's abduction," they said. "Still missing … still very much missed.

"It is hard to find the words to convey how we feel … the police investigation continues, and we await a breakthrough."

Last year, the McCanns lost a European court of human rights (ECHR) challenge to the Portuguese supreme court's decision to throw out a libel case against a former detective who claimed they were implicated in their daughter's disappearance.

The couple sued Gonçalo Amaral, who led the botched police search for Madeleine in 2007, over statements he made in a book, documentary and newspaper interview alleging their involvement.

In 2015, a Lisbon court ordered Amaral, a former detective inspector, to pay €500,000 (£440,000) to Madeleine's parents. However, an appeal court overturned the decision the next year and, in 2017, the supreme court also found against the McCanns. The couple went to the ECHR to seek redress but a chamber of seven judges unanimously decided their rights had not been violated.

Decoding of brain activity reveals how much pain a person is in

Ian Sample
Science editor

Brain signals that reveal how much pain a person is in have been discovered by scientists, who say the work is a step towards radical new treatments for people living with debilitating chronic pain.

It is the first time researchers have decoded the brain activity underlying chronic pain in patients, raising hopes that brain stimulation therapies used to treat Parkinson's disease and major depression could help those who have run out of options.

"What we've learned is that chronic pain can successfully be tracked and predicted in the real world," said Dr Prasad Shirvalkar, a neurologist and lead researcher on the project at the University of California, San Francisco.

A "silent epidemic" of chronic pain affects nearly 28 million adults in the UK alone, meaning nearly 44% of the population have experienced pain for at least three months despite medication or treatment.

But while chronic pain has fuelled a rise in prescriptions of powerful opioids, no medical treatments work well for the condition.

For the latest study, published in Nature Neuroscience, Shirvalkar and his colleagues surgically implanted electrodes into four patients with intractable chronic pain after a stroke or the loss of a limb. The devices allowed the patients to record activity in two brain regions – the anterior cingulate cortex and orbitofrontal cortex (OFC) – at the press of a button on a remote handset.

Several times a day, the volunteers were asked to complete short surveys on the strength and type of pain they were experiencing, and then record snapshots of their brain activity. Armed with the survey responses and brain recordings, the scientists found they could train an algorithm to predict a person's pain based on the electrical signals in their OFC. "We've developed an objective biomarker for that type of pain," said Shirvalkar.

Separate work by the team found that very different brain activity accompanied acute or short-term pain, such as that produced by a hot object touching the skin. The finding may explain, at least in part, why routine painkillers are less effective.

"Chronic pain is not just a more enduring version of acute pain, it is fundamentally different in the brain," Shirvalkar said.

Top Home Office mandarin 'aware' of alleged request by Braverman

Continued *from page 1*

job. Admitting speeding, she said she had paid a fine and taken penalty points, but did not deny asking officials for help. Her team have suggested she did not instruct officials to arrange a course, but merely asked for their advice. Sources elsewhere in government have disputed this.

Rishi Sunak is still considering whether to order an investigation into allegations the home secretary breached the ministerial code by asking taxpayer-funded officials to assist with a private matter.

Downing Street pointedly refused to back Braverman's assertions that she had done nothing wrong after the speeding charge last year, instead saying Sunak was "availing" himself of the information.

The prime minister confirmed he had spoken about the issue to his ethics adviser, Sir Laurie Magnus, although no formal inquiry has yet begun. The adviser cannot begin an investigation without Sunak's authorisation. During a statement in the Commons on the G7, he said: "I have always been clear that where issues like this are raised, they should be dealt with properly and they should be dealt with professionally.

"I have been receiving information on the issues raised, I have met with both the independent adviser and the home secretary. I have asked for further information and I will update on the appropriate course of action in due course."

When taking his seat in the Commons prior to his statement, Sunak was seen patting Braverman on the back in a visible show of support.

Magnus could request all emails and messages sent within the Home Office and between departments if asked to investigate. One source said Braverman's request to officials was in email form, which means Magnus could see it.

The civil servant approached by Braverman was working as an acting staff member in her office, it is understood. The temporary role was meant to help ease the home secretary into her new position after the sacking of her predecessor, Priti Patel.

Sources said the civil servant "was concerned" about the request and informed Rycroft. The Home Office has been approached for a comment.

In her first public comments on the row, Braverman did not deny asking civil servants to intervene. Asked directly about the claims, she said: "Last summer, I was speeding. I regret that. I paid the fine and I took the points but we're focused now on delivering for the British people and working for them."

Pressed on the same question, she repeated her line about "delivering for the British people" and insisted she was "confident nothing untoward has happened".

She then appeared for Home Office questions and said: "I paid the fine and I took the penalty and at no point did I attempt to evade sanction."

Discussions between senior figures in No 10 and the Cabinet Office's propriety and ethics office over the weekend continued into yesterday. With Sunak still to decide whether to launch an inquiry, Whitehall insiders suggested he was "gaining a reputation for being indecisive". There was said to have been "no hold-up" from the Cabinet Office's side, with all information held by the department provided to Downing Street. Many Tory MPs think there could be a reasonable explanation for Braverman asking questions about whether she could take the speed awareness course. But they still want her to "come clean". A government source said Braverman's "inability to answer straight questions in the Commons" had rattled nerves.

Tobias Ellwood, Tory chair of the defence select committee, told Times Radio yesterday: "MPs get speeding fines as do members of the public. I think we've got a couple of ministers that have been banned from driving, you know, they put their hand up, they pay their fine. What you don't do is pull strings or use your connections to try and cover up what you're doing or find an easier route out."

The former cabinet minister Jacob Rees-Mogg suggested there was no need for an investigation. However, Philip Rycroft, a former permanent secretary at the Brexit department, told the BBC that the matter was "on the face of it, I think … a breach of the ministerial code", adding: "The code is very clear. Ministers must ensure that no conflict arises or appears to arise between their public duties and their private interests."

The Labour party leader, Sir Keir Starmer, said Braverman should resign if she is found to have broken the ministerial code.

> *'I paid the fine and I took the points … in my view, I'm confident that nothing untoward has happened'*
>
> **Suella Braverman**
> *Home secretary*



Sketch
John Crace



Sunak straps himself to sinking Tory boat as he tries to swerve the obvious about speedy Suella

We're a long way past the point where we need to ask what exactly Suella Braverman has on Rishi Sunak. Has she got a video of Rish! telling Goldman Sachs clients how best to avoid paying tax? Or is there footage of Sunak snorting coke and leading the singing at the Abba party during lockdown? Whatever it is, it must be weapons grade kompromat.

Why else is she still in her job? Indeed, why was she even made home secretary in the first place? When Rish! got the top job he made a point of saying he would govern with "integrity, accountability and professionalism". So what's the first thing he did? Appoint Suella to one of the four big offices of state just six days after she had been fired for breaking the ministerial code for leaking government policy via her private email.

Since then, she has done her best to live down to her reputation for untrustworthiness and incompetence. I guess Sunak has learned to live with breaking international law over the small boats policy and the casual racism of suggesting all grooming gangs were Asian. After all, he is "far-right curious". He gets a vicarious thrill out of Suella's bigotry and hatred. But the thing is, she's all mouth. She's achieved nothing. Immigration and crime have gone up to record levels on her watch.

Now we've come to Suella's latest indiscretion. It was only a matter of time. Having been caught for speeding, she tried to get her civil servants to see if she could have her own private speed awareness course that no one would ever know about. And her special adviser then lied to the press about it four times. Her civil servants were more concerned about the ministerial code than she was and reported her to their bosses.

And yet Sunak has done nothing. Even though several senior civil servants have observed Suella's actions are a clear breach of the ministerial code – a mixing of the personal and public – Rish! has dithered and delayed.

Saying he wanted "to avail himself" of more information. He can't even bring himself to ask his own ethics adviser, Laurie Magnus, to conduct his own inquiry. Just in case he concludes what is already blindingly obvious to everyone else.

It may not be the most egregious breach of the ministerial code. Certainly not by Braverman's usual gung-ho standards. But she still broke the code. Integrity, professionalism and accountability. Just words. The same old stuff from a tired administration that doesn't even recognise how it has managed

▼ *Suella Braverman, the home secretary, arriving in Downing Street in her ministerial car yesterday*
PHOTOGRAPH: HENRY NICHOLLS/REUTERS



to corrupt itself. Normally, Suella tries to ride out her uselessness and wrongdoing by going to ground. Hiding from the public. Not a good look. This wasn't an option yesterday – she had an afternoon appointment in the Commons with Home Office questions.

She chose to break the ice with a quick, 90-second pooled TV clip. She was delivering on the people's priorities, she insisted. Just wait till she sees the immigration figures on Thursday. And she was convinced that "nothing untoward had happened". Really? Then why did she keep it so quiet? And if there was nothing to hide, then welcome an inquiry. Bring it on.

In the Commons later, Labour got stuck in. Emma Lewell-Buck, Sarah Jones and Yvette Cooper all asked the same question: what instructions had Braverman given to her civil servants to try to get her own customised sanctions?

By now Suella was beginning to sound like a broken record. Like a diehard recidivist saying "no comment" in a police interview when everyone knows she's guilty.

"I regret speeding," she mumbled, refusing to look anyone in the eye. "But I took the points so I didn't try to avoid a sanction." Which wasn't strictly true. A speeding awareness course is not a negotiation. It's not the bespoke service Braverman was trying to organise for herself. So much for being a home secretary on the people's side.

As the session's end neared, Sunak appeared to make his statement on the G7. He gave Braverman a tentative tap on the shoulder but thereafter tried to create distance between them. Rish! looked confused. As if he knew he ought to be doing something but was just too scared. He can't even stop her making rival leadership speeches at fringe conferences. All he can manage is less than full support.

Sooner or later – maybe even today – he is going to have to grow some. Otherwise he will be just blown away. Just more jetsam from the sinking Tory boat.

> *He can't even stop her making rival leadership speeches at fringe conferences. All he can manage is less than full support*



▲ *Dominic Raab said he had become concerned about the pressure his job had put on his young family*
PHOTOGRAPH: JACK TAYLOR/GETTY IMAGES

Dominic Raab
Former deputy PM to stand down as MP at next election

Harry Taylor

Dominic Raab has said he will stand down as an MP at the next general election, weeks after he quit Rishi Sunak's cabinet over bullying claims.

The former deputy prime minister, once regarded as a potential leader of the Conservative party, resigned last month after a report into allegations of bullying found he had been "unreasonably aggressive".

After being elected as an MP in 2010, he had risen to twice serve as deputy PM and was foreign secretary during the botched evacuation from Afghanistan in 2021. He was heavily criticised for being on holiday as the extraction was happening.

In a letter seen by the Daily Telegraph from Raab to the chair of his local Tory association, he said he was concerned about the stress that frontline politics had put on his family.

His Esher and Walton constituency is thought to be vulnerable to a resurgent Liberal Democrat party at the next general election. He has a slender 2,743 majority, and the Surrey seat is among Ed Davey's top targets.

Raab's letter said: "I have become increasingly concerned over the last few years about the pressure the job has placed on my young family."



▲ *Sajid Javid announced he would not stand again back in December*

The newspaper says his sons Joshua and Peter are aged 8 and 10.

Raab, 49, had entered the cabinet as the Brexit secretary under Theresa May, succeeding his former boss David Davis. He, like Davis, later resigned citing differences over the withdrawal agreement. Raab had been tipped to lead the Tories, most notably by author Sasha Swire, who nicknamed him "Raab C Brexit" after fictional Glaswegian Rab C Nesbitt.

He got his chance when May resigned, and he unsuccessfully stood in the ensuing election. The Conservative peer Hugo Swire – husband of Sasha – coordinated his campaign, and he received the high-profile endorsement of Davis, but was eliminated in the second ballot.

The victor in that summer's race, Boris Johnson, made Raab his foreign secretary and first secretary of state – de facto Johnson's deputy.

The Covid pandemic less than a year later and Johnson's hospital admission meant Raab was in charge while his boss was in intensive care.

After Johnson recovered, Raab continued as foreign secretary. He was at the helm when the British and US withdrawal from Afghanistan began in earnest, and the Taliban swept through the country.

Raab was on holiday in Crete at the time of the crisis and was criticised for not doing enough to assist the evacuation effort.

He was reshuffled to become deputy prime minister and justice secretary, and was one of the few cabinet members who stayed loyal to Johnson in his final days in office.

He declined to stand for leadership again in both contests in 2022, having a brief spell on the backbenches during Liz Truss's reign before returning to both roles under Sunak.

But rumours had persisted in Westminster about Raab's conduct and behaviour towards his staff. Further allegations followed until Sunak appointed an independent investigator to examine bullying claims.

At the time, Raab said he would "respect whatever outcome", but when the report by Adam Tolley KC was published he told the Telegraph it was "Kafka-esque" and had set a "dangerous precedent".

He now joins the former chancellor Sajid Javid, the former health secretary Matt Hancock and the former culture secretary Nadine Dorries in deciding to quit the Commons.

Jeremy Hunt
Statistics watchdog rebukes chancellor

Peter Walker
Deputy political editor

The official statistics watchdog has reprimanded the chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, after he claimed public debt levels would fall in the coming years, when in fact they are just forecast to rise less steeply than previously expected.

The head of the UK Statistics Authority (UKSA), Sir Robert Chote, said the watchdog's regulatory arm had spoken to Treasury officials to warn them about accuracy after a complaint by the Labour MP Angela Eagle over a tweet the chancellor sent on 25 April.

Saying the government had "made progress" on the public finances, Hunt wrote: "By 2027-28, headline debt levels are reduced by £53.7 billion."

Eagle, a former Treasury minister who sits on the Treasury committee, wrote to Chote, noting that the Office for Budget Responsibility forecasts indicate that public debt will rise between now and 2027-28, including a £90bn increase from 2026-27 alone.

She said Hunt appeared to be referring to a fall in the OBR's current projection for headline debt in 2027-28 compared with the same forecast in last year's autumn statement. Eagle wrote: "I am concerned that government ministers are using misleading statistics publicly regarding the economy, and believe it is critical that figures used are accurate."

In a reply, Chote said Treasury officials had confirmed this was what the tweet referred to: a reduction in the size of the forecast increase of debt, not a fall in the debt itself.

"As you suggest, some readers of the tweet may have assumed that the chancellor was referring to the forecast change in public sector net debt between the last full financial year and 2027-28," he wrote.

"Greater clarity and context would have avoided this confusion. The Office for Statistics Regulation [the regulatory arm of the UKSA] has therefore spoken with officials at HM Treasury to emphasise the importance of consistently adopting a transparent and accessible approach to communicating statistics and data in line with our guidance on intelligent transparency."

Eagle told the Guardian: "As the statistics authority has confirmed, this government has a persistently troubled relationship with the truth – one that is becoming increasingly obvious if you read the fine print.

"It is incredibly disappointing to see the chancellor resorting to using such misleading statistics in a tweet of all places – a new low for the fourth chancellor in a year."

The Treasury said it had noted Chote's points and would take any necessary action.

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Cleverly's eight-day tour in 'Succession jet' is costing taxpayers £10,000 an hour

Ben Quinn
Political correspondent

In the cut-throat world of hit TV show Succession, it is the go-to private jet for the Roy dynasty, providing a backdrop to the programme's high-level plotting.

Now it has emerged that an Embraer Lineage 1000E - lauded as "the crème de la crème of private business jets" - has also been the choice of aircraft for the foreign secretary James Cleverly's eight-day tour of the Caribbean and Latin America.

The jet costs more than £10,000 per hour to hire, and includes a lounge area with big-screen TV and a master suite for its main VIP, complete with queen-sized bed, private bathroom and shower.

Labour attacked the hire of the jet from a German aviation company as a "ludicrous extravagance" that showed how Rishi Sunak's government was out of touch with the public.

While cheaper options are available, few would have come close to matching the accolades associated with the Embraer Lineage 1000E. The Business Insider website called it "one of the best luxury private jets money can buy" while Luxatic magazine described it as "the ultimate statement of wealth".

Cleverly was tweeting pictures of himself yesterday in the Colombian Amazon, part of a tour that has so far taken him to Kingston, Jamaica, Cartagena and Bogotá in Colombia ahead of scheduled stops in Chile and Brazil.

He was due to use a keynote speech in the Chilean capital, Santiago, yesterday to set out the UK's future relationship with Latin America.

While it is not known how many officials and advisers have travelled with the foreign secretary, up to 19 passengers and three crew can be seated on the Brazilian-built jet, which has been chartered from the German firm Air Hamburg.

When contacted for a quote on the cost of a 10-day round trip to Latin America, taking in two cities, the company said the cost would be about €400,000 (£348,000).

Emily Thornberry, the shadow attorney general, said: "It beggars belief that James Cleverly thought it was appropriate to conduct this tour in the kind of luxury jet used by billionaires and pop stars, with British taxpayers footing the bill. This sort of ludicrous extravagance at the public expense just shows how out of touch Rishi Sunak's government is.

"No wonder their response to the cost of living crisis has been so utterly hopeless when they have such little concept of what ordinary life is like for people in our country."

A Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) spokesperson said: "The foreign secretary's job requires him to travel abroad to pursue UK interests. This was the most time-effective way to do this in this instance. Value for money is taken into account in all travel decisions and costs are regularly published for transparency."

Ministers will use commercial flights where practical and security considerations allow, according to the government.





▲ *James Cleverly arrives in Cartagena on an Embraer Lineage 1000E luxury jet. Left, the jet as seen in the TV show Succession*
MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: COLOMBIAN AIR FORCE

Cleverly was pictured meeting the UK's ambassador to Colombia and other dignitaries at Cartagena after descending the steps of the distinctively marked jet.

In Chile, the FCDO said Cleverly would highlight the UK-Latin America partnership on tackling the climate crisis, upholding democracy and human rights and securing free and open supply chains of critical minerals. Latin America, home to 660 million people and with a combined GDP of almost $6tn, was also described as an enormous potential market for the UK.

From the beginning of 2021 to the end of 2022, there were 31 occasions where foreign secretaries chartered private jets or used one of the government's ministerial planes to travel overseas at a total cost of £4.6m.

A freedom of information request by Thornberry's team revealed that on none of those 31 occasions was the foreign secretary accompanied by members of the media or delegations of businesspeople, leaving the taxpayer to cover the entire cost.

Donations
Tories accept £5m from Egyptian-born billionaire

Peter Walker
Deputy political editor

The Conservatives have accepted a £5m donation from an Egyptian-born billionaire who served as a minister in the government of the former president Hosni Mubarak.

Mohamed Mansour, who was made senior treasurer of the Tories in December, announced he had given the sum to the party, its biggest one-off donation for more than 20 years.

Writing in the Telegraph, Mansour, transport minister under Mubarak from 2006 to 2009, said he had given the money to assist Rishi Sunak - "a very capable prime minister" who, he said, understood the economy.

Mansour is the chair of the Mansour Group multinational corporation, which he owns with two of his brothers. Through another of his companies, Unatrac, he has previously given the party about £600,000.

The new donation is the biggest for the Conservatives since Paul Getty gave the same sum in 2001.

When Mansour was given his party treasurer role, Labour said Sunak could not claim to stand up for integrity when there was "a billionaire who was a part of Hosni Mubarak's autocratic regime being put in charge of drumming up donations".

In his article, Mansour wrote: "I believe that this country has a very capable prime minister, one who understands how growth is generated in the modern economy. He gets the importance of technology and innovation. He can make the modern economy work for all UK citizens.

"My confidence in the prime minister is why I was proud to become a senior treasurer of the Conservative party last December. I want to give him the best chance of having a full five-year term and so have donated £5m to the party's election fighting fund. I look at what he has achieved in his first months in office and think what he could do in five years."

His donation will notably boost Tory coffers before an expected election. Over 2022 as a whole, Labour received more total donations than the Tories - £5m, as against £4.75m.

Mansour's sum is not the biggest single political donation in recent years. Before the 2019 general election, David Sainsbury gave £8m to the Liberal Democrats.



▲ *Mohamed Mansour's donation is the largest to the Tories since 2001*

Brexit red tape Fruit exports to EU have halved since 2021

Lisa O'Carroll
Brussels correspondent

Exports of fruit from the UK to the EU, including traditional English apples and pears, have more than halved since Brexit, according to data released by HMRC.

The decline has been put down to the introduction of trade barriers caused by the UK's departure from the EU, including mandatory health certificates on fresh and chilled food and customs paperwork.

Similar barriers have yet to be introduced on imports to the UK, causing concern about the threat to future imports of British diners' favourites such as fresh cheese, olive oil and dried meats.

HMRC data shows that the barriers, in place since 2021, are biting on the UK-to-EU side of the Brexit ledger.

In the year to 31 March 2021, the UK sold £248.5m worth of fruit to the EU. But sales figures dropped to £119m the next year, and have remained at that level since, with latest tax data showing sales for the year to March 2023 of £113.8m.

The chartered accountancy firm Hazelwoods, which analysed the figures, blamed factors including the risk to farmers who are selling fruit that may end up rotting if delayed by customs or phytosanitary officials.

But it also said that, with the delays and extra cost, retailers in continental Europe were less likely to buy from the UK and were importing fruit from other countries within the bloc.

"For a nation with an historic reputation for producing high-quality fruit, it's a shame that red tape is making it harder for farmers to export their wares," said Rebecca Copping, a partner at Hazlewoods.

"Even double-digit inflation hasn't been enough to bring the value of fruit exports into the black. This shows just how much damage has been inflicted on the sector."

Analysis of HMRC data showed that the overall value of exports to the EU of food had increased but Hazelwoods said "a large proportion of this increase in value can be attributed to rising inflation in food prices, following the Ukraine crisis".

Payouts plan for victims of childhood sexual abuse in England

Sally Weale
Education correspondent

The government is to launch a compensation scheme for victims of child sexual abuse in England, the home secretary has said.

The scheme, announced by Suella Braverman in the Commons, is in response to the findings of a seven-year inquiry that revealed failings by schools, local authorities and other institutions to protect and safeguard the children in their care.

The report, published in October by the independent inquiry into child sexual abuse, found children had faced "limitless" cruelty with the complicity of institutions.

The landmark 458-page report made 20 recommendations, not all of which have been adopted by the government. The chair of the inquiry described the government's measures as deeply disappointing.

The government said victims, survivors and charities would be consulted on areas of the scheme, including on who it should support and how non-state institutions should be involved.

Ministers also launched a 12-week public call for evidence on a new legal duty that will require those who work with children and young people to report if they suspect a child is being sexually abused or exploited.

20
Number of recommendations in the report into child sexual abuse, not all of which have been adopted

The government also pledged to improve access to therapeutic support for victims and the way in which police collect data on child sexual abuse to better understand the scale and nature of the crime.

Prof Alexis Jay, who chaired the inquiry, and the inquiry's victims and survivors consultative panel, issued a statement warning the government package would not adequately protect children from sexual abuse. "We ask the government to reconsider and accept and enact all our recommendations in full," it said.



Rape trials review urges tighter rules on evidence relating to accusers

Haroon Siddique
Legal affairs correspondent

Greater restrictions should be introduced on use of rape complainants' personal records and evidence relating to their sexual behaviour to avoid rape myths contaminating trials in England and Wales, a government-commissioned review has said.

The Law Commission suggests legislative change is necessary to address the decline in rape prosecution and conviction rates since 2016, warning that "pernicious" myths and misconception about rape and sexual assaults "filter through the breadth and depth of the criminal justice system".

Campaigners have been warning for years that intrusive demands for rape complainants' private information during criminal investigations discourage victims from coming forward and, when used in court, can affect the outcomes of trials.

A government amendment to the victims and prisoners bill, announced last week, which it said would halt such practices by police, was dismissed by campaigners as merely restating the existing law.

In a long-awaited consultation published today, the Law Commission says there should be a bespoke set of laws for sexual offence cases, governing access to all complainants' personal records - including therapy notes - by police and lawyers, and their use in trials.

It proposes introducing a requirement for judicial permission, with judges deciding whether the evidence is sufficiently relevant and in the interests of justice to override the complainant's right to privacy.

The commission's proposal is based on the Canadian model, which it also adapts in relation to evidence on the complainant's sexual behaviour, which it says the judge should allow only if it is of genuine value and does not risk prejudice. It recommends that a similar test be applied to evidence relating to any compensation claim, as this can be used "to undermine the complainant's credibility and to suggest that their allegation is false and for the purpose of financial gain during cross-examination".

Campaigners welcomed the commission's recommendations but said they had been too long coming.

Andrea Simon, director of the End Violence Against Women coalition said: "Rather than delivering justice and support, survivors and advocates have long said that the criminal justice system is a site of harm, which retraumatises victims and reinforces victim-blaming at every turn.

"These recommendations are a hugely important step in transforming this and building a fairer and more equal society.

"Despite a government apology and countless commitments to transforming the system, charging and conviction rates remain alarmingly low. All of these issues are rooted in sexist stereotypes and rape myths.

"If the government is serious about ending violence against women and girls, it is imperative that it acts on the outcome of this consultation."

The Law Commission also proposes that complainants have the right to exclude the public - and all members of the press bar one - while giving evidence. Additionally, it asks for views on whether expert evidence should be used to educate jurors in relation to, for example, victims freezing during an assault, or delayed reporting to the police; and whether there should be rape trials without juries, as planned in Scotland.

Jayne Butler, CEO of Rape Crisis England & Wales, said: "The victims and prisoners bill … is an excellent opportunity to address some of the Law Commission's proposals sooner rather than later. Real and meaningful change for survivors is urgent."

Harriet Bland, the director of the Centre for Women's Justice, said: "We will be making detailed submissions on the proposals during the consultation period but would strongly encourage the government to act on calls for change now."

The consultation runs until 29 September.

> *'Survivors say that the criminal justice system reinforces victim-blaming'*
>
> **Andrea Simon** *End Violence Against Women*



▲ Jude Law, left, and Alicia Vikander star in Karim Aïnouz's film about Henry VIII's last marriage
PHOTOGRAPH: PATRICIA DE MELO MOREIRA/GETTY

Blood, sweat and poo: Law wore 'awful' bespoke scent for his role as Henry VIII

Catherine Shoard

Jude Law doused himself in a specially brewed scent blended from "blood, fecal matter and sweat" to play Henry VIII in Firebrand, an acclaimed period drama that premiered at the Cannes film festival.

"I read several interesting accounts that you could smell Henry three rooms away," said Law at a press conference in Cannes yesterday. "His leg was rotting so badly. He hid it with rose oil. I thought it would have a great impact if I smelt awful."

A specialist perfumier was enlisted to make a custom brew, Law said. "She makes wonderful scents, and she also makes awful scents. She somehow came up with this extraordinary variety of blood, fecal matter and sweat.

"Initially, I used it very subtly. But then it became a spray fest."

The film's director, Karim Aïnouz, testified to the success of Law's immersive approach. "When he walked in on set," he said, "it was just horrible."

Law has won plaudits for his performance in the film, which focuses on the king's final marriage, to Catherine Parr, played by Alicia Vikander.

The Guardian's Peter Bradshaw was impressed by the viscerality of Law's performance. "The king's bedchamber is perfumed by the pus splurging from Henry's bloated and ulcerated legs as the doctor changes his bandages, getting thumped and screamed at by the royal patient. This Henry is peevish and cantankerous," he wrote.

"And we at one stage get a full-on shot of His Majesty's pale, fleshy bum as he has conjugal relations with Catherine – like the giant, shaved arse of a sheep. Did Law use a buttock double for this stomach-turning image?"

Law said he is uninterested in the present-day monarchy, aside from its theatrical aspects. "I don't really follow it," he said. "I'm not one for gossip. I don't really enjoy it. I find no interest in it, and I don't really enjoy following tittle-tattle stories."

Law has fronted perfume ads for Dior and is known to be a client of Azzi Glasser, a British "fragrance stylist".

After spending time with Law, Glasser made him a bespoke scent which is said to mix elements of key characters the actor has played.

Film review Food phobia turned into a dog's dinner

Club Zero
Cannes
★★☆☆☆

Peter Bradshaw

Jessica Hausner is the Austrian director whose elegant, refrigerated style has made her a Cannes favourite, and her 2009 film Lourdes, about the ordinary world of miracles, is a classic. But her move to English-language movies has resulted in some nebulous work, such as her 2019 picture Little Joe, and so it has proved with this exasperating and baffling new movie.

Club Zero is a strenuous, pointless non-satire that fails to say anything of value about its ostensible subjects: body image, eating disorders and western overconsumption. The deadpan mannerisms are glib and the laborious drama leads us round and round like an Escher staircase. But it is certainly well shot and punctiliously designed.

The scene is a private school for teenagers from wealthy families. The pupils mostly speak in an upper-middle-class vocal-fry drone; the principal, Ms Dorset (Sidse Babett Knudsen), prides herself on the school's dynamic, forward-thinking attitudes.

Dorset has recently hired a charismatic new teacher called Ms Novak (Mia Wasikowska), who markets her own brand of healthy tea and runs a course in conscious eating; this is a study in mindfulness, meditation and focused thought directed at cutting down the wasteful and damaging way we gorge on processed foods.

Ms Novak's evangelical passion for the subject casts a spell over the five pupils in her class, and she tells them they are to be the privileged few who will form the nucleus of her revolutionary "Club Zero": young people who will survive on no food at all.

There have been recent movies that have dealt satirically with the sexual politics of eating disorders, such as Ruth Paxton's A Banquet and Sebastián Lelio's The Wonder, but they had a clarity and force that Club Zero doesn't. For all its icy control, there is a lack of rigour in its thinking and narrative threads about sexual impropriety lead nowhere. Moreover there are cliches: there needs to be a ban on "Mandarin classes" to indicate overambitious parents.

The film seems to be mocking obviously absurd ideas; essentially it is pointing out imaginary fish in a made-up barrel and saying that these fictional fish deserve to be shot, and also that the people aiming guns at them are uptight and stupid as well. And when Ms Novak condemns overconsumption and greed … well, it's not immediately clear that these ideas are wrong or that they deserve to be satirically escalated into obviously grotesque self-harm. It's another miss from this otherwise very talented film-maker.



▲ The exclusive school in Club Zero includes a course in conscious eating



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Thousands of NHS staff report claims of sexual abuse by patients

Continued from page 1

has made her re-evaluate her career path and she is hoping to go into obstetrics and gynaecology so she does not have to treat men. "I find the sexual harassment affects me too much and makes me feel like shit."

The Guardian and BMJ investigation found trusts recorded 35,606 sexual safety incidents, a term that covers a spectrum of behaviours from abusive remarks to rape, allegedly perpetrated by staff, patients or visitors in NHS hospitals in England between 2017 and 2022.

While the majority were cases of patient-on-staff abuse, nearly 7,500 were allegations of patients abusing other patients and more than 3,000 were cases of staff abusing patients.

Responding to the findings, Simon Fleming, an orthopaedic surgeon and co-author of a 2021 report on sexual assault in surgery for the Royal College of Surgeons, said the NHS needed to take a more robust approach to sexual misconduct by patients.

He said: "Patients abuse staff often. Some of this is normalised, some of it less so. What you permit, you promote, and the NHS needs to stop permitting patients and staff behaving in a way that makes healthcare less safe for all of us."

Some NHS workers do feel able to speak out. Charlotte Miller, a paramedic at Westminster ambulance station in London, said her employers were "incredible" when she reported being molested while attending to a patient on Edgware Road in October 2022. The patient, Naveed Ahmed, in his mid-30s, was jailed for nine months in November 2022.

Miller said: "He had already told my crewmate and I we were sexy and had been leering at us, but then he grabbed my crotch. I was really shocked. I've had comments before, but that was the first time that someone actively tried to grope me. I didn't know what he was going to do next."



▲ *Dr Becky Cox says NHS staff often face unsafe working conditions*

As soon as she radioed for help, the police were called and her station sent a colleague, along with an incident response officer. "I had all these phone calls from various managers to make sure I was OK, they told me to have the rest of my shift off and go home to rest.

"They constantly checked in on me in the days afterwards and helped support me while I made my statements to the police. I couldn't ask for any better management, if I'm honest.

"I hope this will encourage other people to have the confidence to report these things," she said.

Dr Becky Cox, a co-founder of Surviving in Scrubs, said: "The stark findings of this investigation should put into sharp focus the work that the health secretary and NHS leaders need to do to ensure the freedom of NHS staff to work without threat of sexual violence from patients and other staff members.

"It was not long ago we were being heralded as pandemic heroes by the government and cheered by the general public, yet we continue to face unsafe working conditions and the daily threat of abuse."

Surviving in Scrubs lists more than 150 personal accounts of sexual harassment and abuse. They include cases of patients assaulting, molesting and sexualising nurses and doctors.

The health secretary, Steve Barclay, said: "NHS leaders have a statutory duty of care to look after their staff and patients and prevent harassment, abuse or violence in the workplace. I expect employers to be proactive in ensuring staff and patients are fully supported, their concerns listened to and acted on with appropriate action taken where necessary."

Dr Navina Evans, the chief workforce officer at NHS England, said the health service should not tolerate sexual misconduct, violence, harassment or abuse.

"NHS England has established a dedicated team to ensure people who experience violence and abuse are supported in the workplace, and there is greater provision of support for all victims and survivors.

"All NHS trusts and organisations have measures in place to ensure immediate action is taken in any cases reported to them and I strongly encourage anyone who has experienced any misconduct to come forward, report it and seek support."



Hospitals Misconduct and assaults not being fully recorded, warn experts

Anna Bawden
David Batty

More than 100,000 incidents of sexual violence and misconduct in NHS hospitals in England are not being recorded and investigated every year, experts have warned.

An investigation by the Guardian and the British Medical Journal found more than 35,600 "sexual safety incidents" were recorded by NHS hospitals in England over the past five years. The term covers a spectrum of allegations, from abusive remarks to rape, allegedly perpetrated by staff, patients and visitors.

Responses to freedom of information requests from 212 NHS trusts found that 22 each recorded more than 500 alleged incidents over 2017-2022, including seven with between 1,000 and 2,000.

But according to the data released, 59 trusts recorded 20 or fewer incidents, of which 41 recorded between zero and 10. Experts said such low numbers appeared to be highly improbable, given the huge numbers of patients treated and staff employed.

Of the cases that were disclosed, 20,928 were incidents in which patients abused staff. Nearly 7,500 were cases of patients abusing other patients, and more than 3,000 were cases of staff abusing patients.

Experts were particularly concerned that NHS trusts disclosed just 902 alleged incidents of sexual misconduct by staff against staff in a five-year period, equivalent to less than one case in each trust each year.

> *'It is clear many staff either don't feel able or don't know how to report incidents'*
>
> **Dr Sarah Steele**
> *University of Cambridge*

A 2019 survey by Unison found that 8.1% of NHS staff had experienced sexual harassment at work during the past year, with more than three-quarters saying the perpetrator was a fellow staff member. Other research estimates the rate was much higher.

Taking the most conservative estimates of prevalence, Dr Sarah Steele, a senior researcher at the University of Cambridge, said that, with more than 1 million staff employed by the 212 NHS trusts, she would have expected them to have recorded many more incidents of sexual misconduct.

"Based on past self-reporting figures in surveys by health unions and others, we would expect more than 120,000 cases of sexual misconduct per year at NHS trusts in England where the victim is a staff member, of which 90,000-95,000 would be staff-on-staff," said Steele.

This suggests that at least 100,000 alleged incidents against staff a year are not captured in the annual figures that NHS trusts declared in their FoI responses.

"While some people would never report sexual harassment or abuse



to their employer and there is a hidden figure of sexual misconduct, such low numbers suggest extremely worrying under-reporting," said Steele.

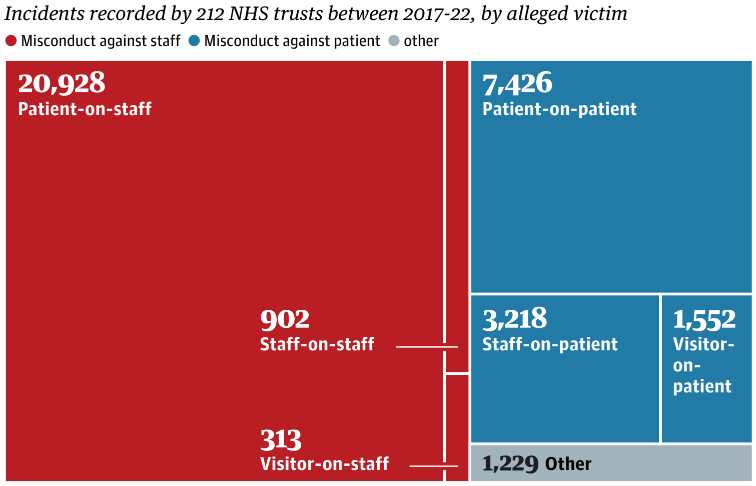
"It is clear many staff either don't feel able or don't know how to report incidents involving their colleagues."

Dr Claudia Paoloni, a consultant anaesthetist at University hospitals Bristol and Weston NHS foundation trust and a former president of the Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association (HCSA) trade union, said: "I was sexually assaulted in front of everyone early in my career, but when I raised it internally at that time, they said: 'You could report, but you do realise you would be known as the person who got a senior consultant sacked?', so I didn't take it any further.

"Because I never went to the police, there's no record of it having happened. In my HCSA role, I've seen that many trusts only pay lip service to sexual safety."

More than half the incidents of sexual violence and misconduct recorded by NHS trusts involved patients abusing staff

Incidents recorded by 212 NHS trusts between 2017-22, by alleged victim



Source: Guardian FoI requests to 212 NHS Trusts. Note: Some trusts used different categories or grouped types of abuse together

◀ *More than 35,600 'sexual safety incidents' were recorded by NHS England in the past five years* PHOTOGRAPH: GRAEME ROBERTSON/GUARDIAN

An analysis of the FoI responses showed that while all trusts have policies that govern behaviour at work, fewer than 10% of respondents had standalone sexual safety policies, which contain specific measures to protect patients, visitors and staff from sexual violence and misconduct and set out what processes to follow when cases are reported.

Only one of the NHS trusts that recorded zero or few incidents had a dedicated sexual safety policy. In contrast, those that had a specific policy tended to record far more cases.

Research published earlier this month by the University of Cambridge showed that only one NHS trust in England provided dedicated training to prevent sexual harassment.

Police figures show 11,880 alleged sexual crimes on NHS premises in the past five years, with the vast majority alleged to have taken place in hospitals.

FoI responses from 37 police forces in England list 3,084 rapes, including 56 gang rapes, and 5,164 sexual assaults. Forces did not consistently provide a breakdown of who the alleged perpetrator was.

These include 493 alleged child sexual offences in hospitals, mental health units and GP surgeries in England recorded by 32 police forces, with at least 171 alleged victims aged under 13.

The alleged offences include 180 alleged rapes of children under 16, of which four were gang rapes, 186 sexual assaults of children under 16, and 127 other child sexual offences, including grooming, assaulting a child by penetration, sexual communication with a child, inciting sexual activity with a child, and causing a child to watch a sex act.

Responding to the findings, medical colleges and health unions demanded immediate action. The BMA called on the government to "urgently produce a plan of action to protect our colleagues", while the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, the HCSA, which represents hospital doctors, the GMB union, the Society of Radiographers, the British Dietetic Association, and the Liberal Democrats called for a full independent inquiry into sexual assault and harassment in the NHS.

The health secretary, Steve Barclay, said: "NHS leaders have a statutory duty of care to look after their staff and patients and prevent harassment, abuse or violence in the workplace. I expect employers to be proactive in ensuring staff and patients are fully supported, their concerns listened to and acted on, with appropriate action taken where necessary."

An NHS spokesperson said sexual misconduct was "totally unacceptable", adding: "NHS England is already reviewing how it supports the health service to develop policies, education, and training to tackle sexual misconduct in the workplace and better support staff. This includes building on the work of the government's women's health strategy."



▲ *Junior doctors outside St Thomas' hospital, London, last month. The BMA has announced further action next month* PHOTOGRAPH: MAJA SMIEJKOWSKA/REUTERS

Strike plan
More action in England by junior doctors

Denis Campbell
Health policy editor

Junior doctors in England will stage a fresh strike for three days next month after negotiations with ministers failed to resolve their pay dispute.

The 72-hour stoppage will run from 7am on Wednesday 14 June to 7am on Saturday 17 June, the British Medical Association announced yesterday evening.

It will be the third strike junior doctors have held as part of a campaign to force ministers to give them a 35% pay rise to make up for what they estimate to be a 26.2% fall in the real-terms value of their salaries since 2008.

The BMA warned that it would keep striking for at least three days every month "throughout the summer" until their legal mandate for industrial action expires. Junior doctors have already staged a three-day strike in March and a four-day one over Easter last month.

The union blamed the government for next month's industrial action and said ministers had only offered junior doctors a "not credible" pay rise of 5%. But Whitehall sources hit back and claimed that at one point during the recent negotiations, the BMA proposed a four-year pay deal that would have led to junior doctors getting a 49% increase.

A government spokesperson accused the BMA of sticking to its position of making "unaffordable headline demands on pay" and refusing to compromise.

The NHS in England may soon be faced with strikes by other staff groups too. The Royal College of Nursing's second ballot of its members, seeking a legal mandate for another six months of stoppages, opens today.

The BMA is also balloting hospital consultants to see if they want to join the junior doctors in striking in pursuit of better pay.

Dr Vivek Trivedi and Dr Robert Laurenson, the co-chairs of the BMA's junior doctors committee, disclosed that they had been talking to the health secretary, Steve Barclay, for the last three weeks in an attempt to avoid a repeat of the two stoppages so far, which have hugely disrupted NHS services.

But they said negotiations became "unproductive" when Barclay refused to accept that junior doctors' pay has been significantly eroded over time and needs to be restored to 2008 levels.

The talks collapsed yesterday after what turned out to be a final meeting between the sides.

Trivedi and Laurenson said they had held three weeks of negotiations with the government since the end of their four-day stoppage last month, which caused huge concern in the NHS.

They said that they had entered the talks "in good faith" and hoped that "we would finally see a real offer on the table that would avoid the need for more industrial action.

"We made proposals showing our willingness to be creative and work with the government on how the reversal of our pay erosion could be achieved.

"In the end, however, the government would simply not accept the fundamental reality of the pay cuts junior doctors have faced.

"This was made clear when they finally made their pay offer of 5%. Not only is that nowhere near addressing pay erosion over the last 15 years, it would not even have matched inflation this year."

The government spokesperson said it was "both surprising and deeply disappointing" that the BMA had called a further strike while "constructive" talks, including about non-pay issues such as junior doctors no longer having to pay to take exams, were ongoing.

"We made a fair and reasonable opening offer, and were in active discussions about both pay and non-pay issues.

"Unfortunately, it seems the BMA is unwilling to move meaningfully away from their unaffordable headline demands on pay."

The BMA said it planned to meet Barclay again tomorrow. But Barclay will only engage in further talks if the junior doctors call off their strike, which looks unlikely.

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Charity fundraiser dies having completed impressive bucket list

Robyn Vinter
North of England correspondent

Very few people would be able to say they had commanded a Royal Navy ship, met Michelle Obama and presented a television weather forecast.

But Laura Nuttall, from Barrowford in Lancashire, did not let a terminal cancer diagnosis stop her from ticking off an impressive bucket list before her death yesterday at the age of 23.

Diagnosed with an aggressive form of brain cancer, Nuttall said she had chosen "to do something about it and stay positive" when she was given only 12 months to live in 2018.

"What sort of legacy will I leave if I just focus on myself and not others?" Nuttall said in 2021 while accepting an award for her charity work. "The day I was diagnosed with brain cancer, I just thought 'I've got two options … I could say all right, that's fine, I'm going to sit here and die or am I going to do something about it and stay positive?' and that is what I chose to do."

She was in her first university term in 2018 when, after an eye test, she received a diagnosis of glioblastoma multiforme, the most aggressive form of brain cancer, which is incredibly rare in young women. Further tests found she had eight tumours and she was given just a year to live.



▲ *Laura Nuttall (left) at her university graduation in July 2022, with her sister Gracie*
PHOTOGRAPH: LORNE CAMPBELL/GUZELIAN

Nuttall went through several rounds of treatment, including invasive surgery, to extend her life and she was able to graduate with a 2:1 in politics, philosophy and economics.

In 2021, the comedian Peter Kay performed two sold-out Q&A sessions at the Manchester Apollo, called Doing It for Laura, to raise money for specialist treatment in Germany.

She described her bucket list as "never ending, because when it ends, I end". It also included running a marathon; driving a monster truck, crane, tractor, digger, tank and London Underground train; skydiving; going fishing with Paul Whitehouse and Bob Mortimer; and having a video chat with Malala Yousafzai.

Her mother, Nicola Nuttall, paid tribute to her daughter: "She was fierce & tenacious to the end & it was truly the honour of my life to be her mum. We are devastated at the thought of life without our girl, she was a force of nature."

Brain Tumour Research, a charity Nuttall had fundraised for, said it was "deeply saddened" , adding: "Along with her family [Laura] did so much to raise awareness of this disease."

Fewer than 5% of people with Nuttall's condition survive longer than five years. The life expectancy without treatment is three months.

Rail passengers in England could lose their access to wifi amid cost cuts



▲ *Laptop computers and mobile phones in use in a rail carriage*

Gwyn Topham
Transport correspondent

Train passengers face losing access to wifi after the government told rail companies to stop providing the service unless they can demonstrate its business case.

The move is being pushed by the Department for Transport (DfT) in order to cut costs as it looks to "reform all aspects of the railway".

Most British train services now provide free wifi as standard but the DfT has told its contracted operators in England to cease offering it if they cannot justify it financially.

The DfT said it was looking for "value for money" and wifi was low on passengers' priorities, particularly on shorter journeys.

The drive was questioned by passenger groups and industry figures, who said the railway should be doing all it could to attract people back, with peak commuter numbers still far short of pre-pandemic levels.

Christian Wolmar, who revealed the proposals on the Calling All Stations podcast, said it was a "ridiculous measure".

He added: "The DfT actually wants to reduce the quality of the train service by saying to passengers: sorry, you can't access wifi. It's all about saving money. But we're trying to attract commuters back on to the railway, and people like to get on their phone or laptops. They're going backwards. My view is that wifi is as essential as toilets now – people expect to be connected."

Bruce Williamson from the passenger campaign group Railfuture said: "One of the great things about travelling by train is that you can work or watch a video or listen to a podcast – and wifi is pretty essential for that. We should be encouraging passengers to get back on the trains and this is a good example of a move that is going to make rail less attractive."

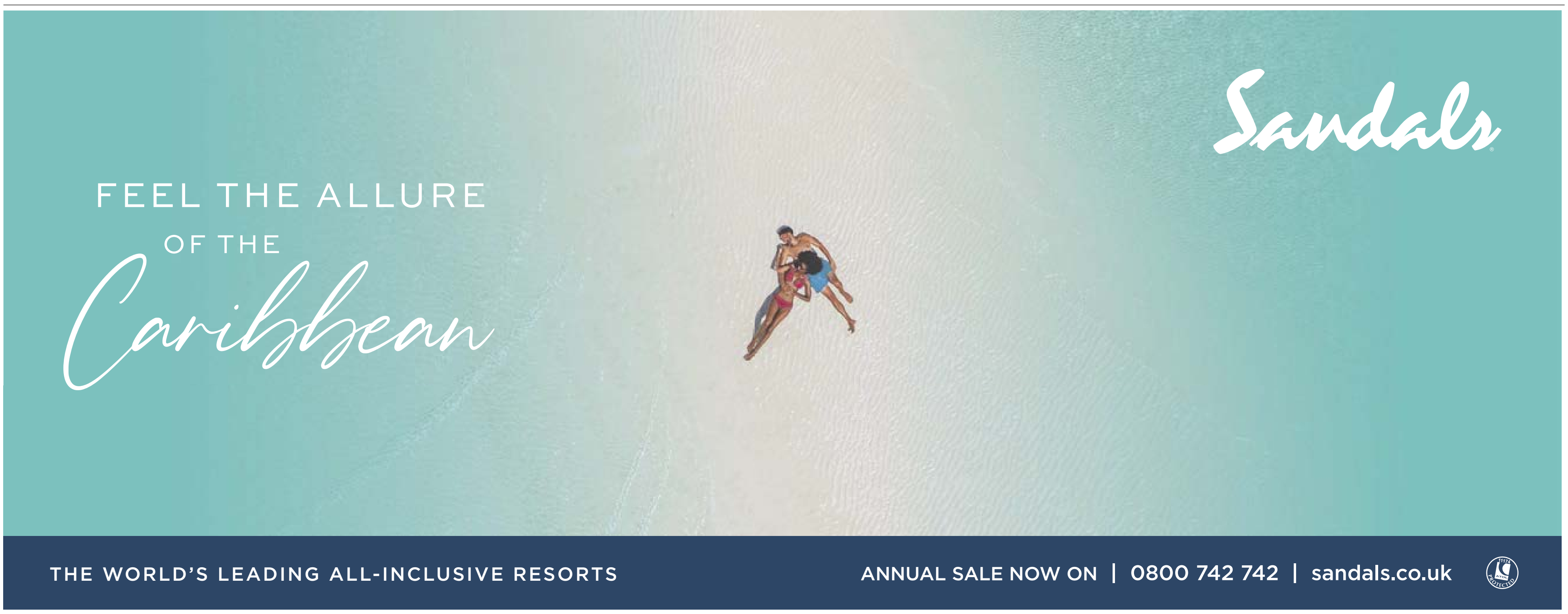
A DfT spokesperson said: "Our railways are currently not financially sustainable, and it is unfair to continue asking taxpayers to foot the bill, which is why reform of all aspects of the railways is essential.

"Passenger surveys consistently show that on-train wifi is low on their list of priorities, so it is only right we work with operators to review whether the current service delivers the best possible value for money."

According to a Transport Focus report cited by the DfT, a survey in December 2022 showed wifi on trains was a lower priority for passengers than other features – although those included such essentials as value-for-money fares, reliability, punctuality and personal security.

The DfT is also considering the cost of replacing or upgrading some on-train wifi equipment installed in the middle of the last decade.

'Our railways are … not financially sustainable and it is unfair for taxpayers to foot the bill'
DfT spokesperson



Lee Rigby's mother pays tribute to 'gentle soul' 10 years on from murder

Tobi Thomas

Lyn Rigby, the mother of murdered Fusilier Lee Rigby, says that she speaks to her son every morning and can still feel his presence a decade after he was killed.

Rigby, 25, was murdered 10 years ago on 22 May 2013 by terrorists near his military barracks in Woolwich, south London. His attackers, Michael Adebolajo and Michael Adebowale, were found guilty of his murder and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Rigby told Good Morning Britain that her son would never be forgotten, and she wanted to use his legacy to do more for bereaved families.

"I still speak to Lee, usually at the night-time when I get time to myself when everybody has gone to bed," Rigby said. "I'll sit and light a candle, and look at Lee's picture and just talk away to him. Sometimes I'll laugh, sometimes I'll cry and sometimes I'm angry. I just do it every single morning when I open my eyes, I have a picture of Lee in the bedroom and I'll speak to him every morning. That gives me a focus to get up and to carry out what I've got to do that day."

Rigby also said she believed that her son was able to hear what she was saying. "Things happen in the house, things can fly off the windowsill or the mantelpiece and there's nothing to explain why this has happened. I do feel warmth in the night-time and feel that Lee is there sat next to me, giving me a hug and telling me that he loves me," she said.

"For the table, when we have family occasions and all get together for a celebration there's always an empty chair there for Lee at the dining table."

After his death, the Lee Rigby Foundation was set up as a support network for bereaved military families, and has raised funds to provide caravans for the families to use.

"Lee was a very gentle soul, he wasn't perfect, he had his awkward and stubborn sides but he had a heart of gold and would help anybody. He would want me to do this and to carry on in [his] name for the bereaved families. I think Lee would be proud of what we are doing," Rigby said.

Her most treasured memory of her son was him throwing Coco Pops cereal down the stairs when he was a toddler, she added.

Sadiq Khan, the mayor of London, said: "My thoughts and prayers are with the family, friends and colleagues of Fusilier Lee Rigby on the 10th anniversary of his senseless murder. We will never forget the appalling events of that day and on behalf of all Londoners, I want to extend deepest sympathies to his loved ones and all those impacted by his death."





▲ *Lyn Rigby (above) said her son, Lee, (right) had 'a heart of gold', and she still felt his presence and spoke to him*

▼ *Lee Rigby was murdered outside the Royal Artillery Barracks in Woolwich, south London, on 22 May 2013*



Souness to swim Channel for skin disorder charity

Guardian sport

Graeme Souness, the former Liverpool and Rangers midfielder, has announced plans to swim the Channel to raise money for Debra, a charity that supports people with epidermolysis bullosa. Otherwise known as "butterfly skin", the rare and extremely painful genetic condition causes the skin to become fragile and tear or blister.

Souness gave his backing to the charity after meeting Isla Grist, a 14-year-old living with recessive dystrophic epidermolysis bullosa. "From the time I have spent with Isla and her family, I have seen first-hand the extreme pain this devastating condition causes and the daily challenges it creates," he said.

He is now set to undertake the 21-mile swim between Dover and Calais - which can take up to 16 hours - as part of a six-person team including Isla's father, Andy. "This will certainly be the most difficult challenge I've ever taken on," Souness said.



Representative Example	Duration of Agreement	Upfront Cost	Monthly Device Payment	Credit Amount	Total Amount Payable	Interest Rate	Representative APR	Device Cash Price	Airtime Plan until March 2024	Airtime Plan April 2024 - March 2025	Airtime Plan April 2025 - March 2026
iPad Pro 11' 4th Gen 128GB	48 months	£20	£22.50	£1,079.75	£1,099.75	0%	0%	£1,099.75	£11	£11 + RPI announced in Feb 2024 = Price A	Price A + RPI announced in Feb 2025

***Each year your Airtime Plan will be increased by the Retail Price Index (RPI) rate of inflation announced in February plus 3.9%. If RPI is negative, we'll only apply the 3.9%. You'll see this increase on your April 2024 bill onwards. See o2.co.uk/prices.** £22.50 Device Plan for 48 months and £11 monthly rolling Airtime Plan. £20 upfront. Get 6 months airtime at £0 cost when you buy the iPad Pro 11 inch 4th Generation with a 48-month device plan. £22.50 for the first 6 months and £33.50* thereafter on a 1GB tariff. £66 saving achieved by £11 per month discount on the 1GB Airtime Plan for 6 months. Discount applies until you change tariff, leave or upgrade. Data allowances must be used within the months and cannot be carried over. Subject to availability. Ends 31st May 2023. **48 Months O2 Refresh custom plans:** 48 Months O2 Refresh custom plans: Direct purchases only. Pay the cash price for your device or spread the cost over 3 to 48. Like new devices available for 3 to 36 months. The device cost will be the same whatever you choose. There may be an upfront cost. You need a monthly rolling Airtime Plan as long as you have a Device Plan. Pay off your Device Plan at any time and you can choose to keep your Airtime Plan, upgrade or leave. If your Airtime Plan ends for any reason you will need to pay your Device Plan in full. If you are in the first 24 months of your Device Plan and you cancel your Airtime Plan you will have to pay the remainder of your Device Plan in full. After 24 months you can keep your Airtime Plan, upgrade it, or end it without affecting your Device Plan. Get up to 6 months' Apple TV+ when you buy an eligible iOS device on a Plus Plan from O2 ("Qualifying Purchase"). Redeem directly with Apple via redemption code provided to you within 7 days of Qualifying Purchase. All participants must redeem by 9th November 2023. Redemption terms apply. O2 provides a 3-month subscription (a "Subscription Period"), depending on which available device or offer is chosen, added to any existing or new trial period of up to 3 months provided by Apple directly. You must set up Apple account and agree to Apple's terms of use. You'll be automatically enrolled on to a paid monthly subscription directly with Apple at the end of the relevant Subscription Period. You cannot benefit from more than one subscription period with O2. Tariff eligibility criteria applies which includes being a UK resident and 18+. No cash or alternatives. Lost redemption codes will not be replaced. Offer may be withdrawn or amended at any time. Internet access required. **For how to claim and full terms:** o2.co.uk/termsandconditions/rewards. UK Data Only. Devices subject to availability. 0% APR. Finance subject to status and credit checks. 18+. Direct Debit. Credit provided by Telefónica UK Ltd, SL1 4DX. Telefónica UK is authorised and regulated by the FCA for consumer credit and insurance. Terms apply, see o2.co.uk/terms

Flower show's smallest garden highlights inequalities across west London borough

Safi Bugel

Alongside displays of bright flowers and cutting-edge garden design, visitors at this year's Chelsea flower show will find an exhibition featuring native weeds and plants.

The display, which is part of the smallest garden ever shown at the event, has been designed by the guerrilla gardening group Grow2Know to draw attention to disparities in access to green space in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

According to data gathered by the urban planning and design practice Prior and Partners, people in Notting Dale, the North Kensington ward where Grenfell Tower is situated, have access to only 41.66 sq metres of green space - the equivalent of three parking bays - within a 1km radius. Those in the neighbouring South Kensington ward of Queen's Gate have access to 2,149 sq metres. The Grow2Know plot at this year's show, called The Green Gap, is 4.2 sq metres, a 1:10 scale representation of the green space available to some of those living in Notting Dale.

Tayshan Hayden-Smith, founder of Grow2Know and a footballer who was born in North Kensington, described the display as "a visual representation of the stark reality of inequality within the borough".

He said: "As an organisation that strongly believes everyone should have equal access to green space, we are dedicated to driving and inspiring change, and we'll make it our mission to make gardening more inclusive and naturally accessible to all through ongoing community-driven gardening projects and education."

Encased in concrete, the exhibition brings together dandelions, thyme and camomile, all of which residents can expect to find growing in their streets, just a stone's throw from the Royal Hospital Chelsea, the flower show's venue.



▲ *Students get a preview of Chelsea's smallest garden*
PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN NGUYEN/PA

The project follows Hayden-Smith's Hands Off Mangrove display at the show last year, which centred on a 4-metre tall, deforested mangrove sculpture with nine bare roots, each one honouring a member of the Mangrove Nine group of black activists whose trial in the 1970s exposed racial bias in the police. The sculpture doubled up as a protective canopy, under which people could gather in the garden's second life in the North Kensington area.

Hayden-Smith has since been appointed as a Royal Horticultural Society ambassador for young people and communities.

Grow2Know was formed in response to the Grenfell Tower fire in 2017, as a way to promote collective healing, to reclaim space and to reconnect people in the community.

Based in North Kensington, the grassroots non-profit has collaborated with local people and schools to put community at the forefront in the creation of public outdoor spaces.

The group is responsible for the Grenfell Peace Garden and has collaborated with the Natural History Museum to develop more green spaces in west London. It is also committed to pushing for sustainable systems that promote biodiversity and regenerative practices.

Grow2Know's garden will be exhibited at the RHS Chelsea flower show, which runs until 27 May

Plan bee

Volunteers fight to save threatened creatures

Esther Addley

'If you want to look at bees, go to a city rather than the countryside," says Sarah Hudson, and - on a bright spring day in central London - it's not hard to see what she means.

Hudson, a retired accountant, is carefully picking a path through the overgrown gravestones of the historic Bunhill Fields cemetery, pointing out the bees buzzing through an abundance of wild and cultivated spring flowers.

"Oh, there we go, yes, lovely!" she says of a fat, fuzzy bumblebee that has settled on a bright blue flower. "That's a buff-tailed worker. As you can see, they dwell on the flower for quite a long time."

Though she regularly helps maintain the grounds, once a month Hudson comes here specifically to count bumblebees, tracing the same path, at the same pace, and noting the number, species and whereabouts of every one she sees.

As such, she is one of an army of people at the forefront of conservation efforts to save one of Britain's best-loved creatures. However plentiful they may be in this tiny urban idyll, times are tough farther afield for the British bumblebee.



▲ *Volunteer Dr Sarah Hudson at the Bunhill Fields bee count*



▼ *A bumblebee hard at work*
PHOTOGRAPHS: SARAH LEE/THE GUARDIAN

"Basically, the numbers are decreasing all over the shop for a lot of the [bumblebee] species," says Richard Comont, science manager of the Bumblebee Conservation Trust - an organisation founded to try to arrest that decline.

Its aim, he says, is "to get people a bit more switched on to the fact that these things are disappearing - and that 'bee' doesn't just mean honeybee".

It certainly doesn't. There are 270 different species of bee in Britain, 250 or so of which are solitary bees which don't live in nests or colonies, "and they generally do quite well", he says. Honeybees, living in hives of 50,000 or more individuals, are now almost all managed by beekeepers, says Comont, "so looking after them is essentially not conservation, it's animal husbandry".

Bumblebees, however, have "a perfect storm of difficulty going on" - living in nests of 100 or so workers, "they've got an awful lot of mouths to feed for every breeding individual but only comparatively small nests".

Unlike honeybees, they do not roam far to forage for food. "So they've got a big job to do, and it's not very easy for them to do it," says Comont.

Two bumblebee species have gone extinct in the UK in the past century - one of them only in 2000.

Which is where Hudson and her fellow volunteers come in. Between March and October each year, they walk a designated route and count how many bees they see, as part of an initiative called BeeWalk; after a little more than a decade, the trust now has a community of almost 800 citizen bee counters, and has amassed one of the largest bumblebee datasets in the world.

It is important, says Comont, "because if you look at abundance year on year, you can see a decline, you get that early warning, you know when you need to be doing stuff".

Sadly, due to habitat loss and the changing climate, the news is not encouraging in many places. In the case of the bumblebee, more than half of British species are getting scarcer, including some that were once quite common. Wildflower hedges and verges are disappearing, leaving bumblebee populations with too few and too small patches of flowery habitat.

On the other hand, "gardens, window boxes, right the way out to estates, cover an area the size of Somerset in Britain", says Comont, so from planting bumblebee-friendly flowers in a window box to allowing clover to grow in lawns to not immediately ripping up weeds ("essentially, volunteer wildflowers"), urban gardeners can play an important part.

In Hudson's case, having moved to the Cotswolds after her retirement and "absolutely hating it", she and her partner moved back to central London where, from a position of almost total ignorance about bumblebees, she has now completed a master's in ecology, specialising in the insects.

"I'm still not an expert by any means. But they're just absolutely fascinating creatures, for something so small. The things they can learn to do, because they are social animals. They are just amazing."

Ferrier loses appeal over House of Commons ban

Ben Quinn
Severin Carrell

Margaret Ferrier has lost her appeal against a proposed 30-day ban from the House of Commons over Covid rule breaches, paving the way for a byelection in the MP's Scottish constituency.

The former Scottish National party MP was found to have damaged the reputation of the Commons and put people at risk after taking part in a debate and travelling by train while she had Covid in September 2020.

The failure of her appeal could trigger a recall petition in her Rutherglen and Hamilton West constituency, where a byelection would provide Labour with an opportunity to contest a seat in Scotland, where it hopes to make gains in the general election.

The seat, won by the SNP in 2019 and by Labour in 2017, would be a crucial electoral test for Scotland's new first minister, Humza Yousaf, whose party has been mired in financial scandal and personal clashes.

Any suspension of 10 or more working days automatically triggers a recall petition, which, if signed by 10% of constituents, leads to a byelection.

The length of Ferrier's suspension alarmed backers of Boris Johnson, who is being investigated by the privileges committee about breaches of Covid rules in Downing Street. He hopes to avoid a similarly lengthy sanction, which could prompt a byelection in his Uxbridge seat.

Yesterday an independent expert panel dismissed Ferrier's appeal, saying it had "no substance", after the Commons standards committee recommended her suspension in March. "The first stage of the appeal process has not been met," it said. "The sanction imposed was neither unreasonable nor disproportionate. For these reasons, this appeal is dismissed."

Scottish Labour's deputy leader, Jackie Baillie, said a byelection had now moved "one step closer" in the constituency, where the party already has a candidate in the form of Michael Shanks, a modern studies teacher who lives locally.

The SNP said it was "ready to take the fight to the Tories and pro-Brexit Labour party" during the byelection but it has been struggling to find a suitable candidate. The SNP's opponents assume that no one in the SNP will want to fight the seat given the high probability that they would lose.



▲ *Margaret Ferrier is facing a 30-day ban for breaches of Covid regulations*

> ***'The sanction was neither unreasonable nor disproportionate'***
>
> **Independent expert panel, UK parliament**

Junior doctors in Scotland offered cumulative pay increase of 14.5%

Severin Carrell
Scotland editor

Hospital doctors in Scotland have been offered a cumulative 14.5% pay rise in a fresh attempt by ministers to avert highly disruptive strikes.

Junior doctors had voted overwhelmingly in favour of strike action in Scotland for the first time after rejecting the original Scottish government offer, in a dispute closely mirroring the industrial action by doctors in English hospitals.

The British Medical Association has put the revised offer to Scottish junior doctors, saying this is the best deal they are likely to get. It involves an extra 3% in backdated pay on top of last year's 4.5% award and a rise of 6.5% this year, taking the cumulative increase to 14.5% over two years. So far, no deal has been put to English junior doctors, who have carried out two strikes in hospitals.

Dr Chris Smith, the chair of BMA Scotland's junior doctors committee, said that while this offer only partly dealt with the historical shortfall between their pay over the last 15 years and the effects of inflation, it would help close that gap.

Michael Matheson, Scotland's health secretary, said he was delighted to put forward "a fair and progressive rise" to junior doctors. However, his claim that the offer had been agreed by the BMA was rejected by Smith.

"To be clear, this is not a deal we have agreed, and we have not accepted any offer," Smith said. Even so, "we feel this offer reflects the best that the Scottish government will offer after this series of negotiations.

"[The] members who gave us an overwhelming mandate for strike action will now decide whether the offer is sufficient as we begin the long overdue journey towards pay restoration, which would still have some way to go if the offer is approved."

The Scottish government said the offer would cost £61.3m and was the best made by any government in the UK. Doctors' pay deals are negotiated separately in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Scottish ministers have also proposed to set up a junior doctors pay bargaining review taskforce. The BMA said that should lead to a "vastly improved mechanism" to continue restoring pay levels to close the gap between pay and the cost of living.



'Constant pain': Munchetty tells of life with little-known womb disorder

Rachel Hall



▸ *Naga Munchetty spoke of her experience of adenomyosis on BBC Radio 5 Live to raise awareness of the little-known womb condition thought to affect 10% of women*
PHOTOGRAPH: SUKI DHANDA/ THE GUARDIAN

> *'As I sit here talking to you I am in pain. And I'll have some level of pain until I go to sleep'*
> **Naga Munchetty**
> *BBC presenter*

The BBC presenter Naga Munchetty has revealed the excruciating pain she experiences caused by a little known womb condition in the hope of raising awareness of adenomyosis, which is thought to affect up to one in 10 women.

She said a flare-up at the weekend was so painful that her husband called an ambulance after she screamed for 45 minutes, yet she had struggled to obtain a diagnosis and treatment after decades of painful, heavy 10-day periods that sometimes made her pass out.

Munchetty told her Radio 5 Live listeners: "Right now as I sit here talking to you, I am in pain. Constant, nagging pain. In my uterus. Around my pelvis. Sometimes it runs down my thighs. And I'll have some level of pain for the entire show and for the rest of the day until I go to sleep."

Adenomyosis is a condition where the womb lining grows deep within the muscular wall of the womb. Similar to endometriosis, in which womb lining grows outside the organ, it can cause severe symptoms, including extremely heavy and painful periods, bleeding and pain during and after sex or when going to the toilet.

Adenomyosis is more common in women over 40, though it also affects younger women, and often goes undetected. It is more common among women who have given birth multiple times, especially if they had a caesarean section.

Treatments include hormonal contraceptives, painkillers and anti-inflammatories. In some cases, the only solution is surgically removing the womb, a hysterectomy, which Munchetty is resisting to avoid early menopause.

She said doctors had told her she was "just unlucky", and that she had to adapt her life to accommodate the pain and heavy bleeding, including setting alarms throughout the night to replace her tampon. There is still no dedicated NHS page for adenomyosis, she added.

Jo Hanley, an adviser at Endometriosis UK, said a lack of specific guidelines makes diagnosis and treatment difficult. "The lack of awareness, guidelines and research available for healthcare practitioners will filter down to the general public."

One guest on the BBC show, Jen Moore, said the pain "feels like I have a bowling ball sat inside my pelvis pushing out on the bones from the inside out trying to break them". She said she had to medicate everyday, and was regularly bed bound.

Another guest, Amy, said she could not play with her 11-year-old daughter because of the pain. "It breaks my heart," she said in tears.

According to Prof Ying Cheong, professor of reproductive medicine at the University of Southampton, adenomyosis and endometriosis were considered to be the "same family of disease" as they both involve endometrial glandular tissue being located outside the womb.

About 40% of women with adenomyosis also have endometriosis, said Dr Alison Maclean, a women's health researcher at the University of Liverpool. She added that although there had been recent advances in ultrasound and MRI diagnoses, "they are not 100% accurate, and the diagnostic criteria are still being debated".

Dharani Hapangama, professor of gynaecology at Liverpool, said some clinical trials were looking into "desperately needed" new treatments, but basic science was needed to better understand the condition thought to affect 10% of women, as "we know very little about it": "The main issue is the lack of funding for research."

Adenomyosis may also affect fertility, though the link remains poorly understood. Research by Tommy's, the miscarriage charity, found that one in 10 women with reduced fertility have a diagnosis of adenomyosis.

A Department of Health and Social Care spokesperson said the first ever government-led women's health strategy for England, published last summer, would "boost the health and wellbeing of women and girls … while improving how the health and care system listens to all women".

Adenomyosis diagnosis
'It took almost 30 years'

Karen Dugmore, 44, from Birmingham, had normal periods until after she had her children.

"I had two children within three years and started to feel serious pain around my time of the month at age 35. I went to the doctor and was told it was period pains, so I just got on with it."

By the time she was 41 she had taken a significant turn for the worse, and was eventually advised by a colleague to see a doctor.

Untypically for women with adenomyosis, Karen was diagnosed within eight months of getting in touch with her doctor. "I felt lucky from start to finish," she said. "But I am sitting here, in pain. It's constant. I think hysterectomy may be the only option, although I am having injections to medically induce menopause first."

Sarah, from Hampshire, was diagnosed with the condition at the age of 43, after suffering with severe pain since the age of 14. "It took almost 30 years for me to get a diagnosis. I had heavy periods my whole life, and was given the pill at a young age to try to lessen the bleeding, but the pain was terrible every day. I was told by doctors that I was suffering from IBS."

The symptoms worsened after her second pregnancy. "I went to the GP to say I could no longer cope and she agreed that it might be endometriosis. Luckily, I had private medical cover and got a speedy referral."

The consultant suspected adenomyosis after a scan, and advised Sarah to undergo a hysterectomy, which she did a few weeks later. "They said it was the only solution, but they could only confirm I had adenomyosis after I'd had the surgery." She says her life has hugely improved since she recovered from the hysterectomy.
Jedidajah Otte



▲ *Doctors told Karen Dugmore she was just suffering from period pains*

'More human contact needed' to avoid errors in welfare payments

Robert Booth
Social affairs correspondent

More human contact is needed in the UK's automated welfare system, ministers have been warned, as it emerged that 350 low-paid workers every day are raising complaints about errors in welfare top-ups causing financial hardship.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) handled 126,286 disputes about errors made by its decade-old automated "real-time information" system in 2022, a freedom of information request revealed. The technology is a key cog in the administration of universal credit (UC) and delivers a flow of earnings data from tax to benefit offices to automatically adjust workers' welfare top-ups.

The problems particularly affect single mothers working part-time, according to researchers at the University of Edinburgh, who obtained the complaints data using transparency laws. The DWP has been criticised for its lack of openness about the way its automated and artificial intelligence systems work and how they affect claimants.

Emily, an administrator, said she was docked £300 when her employer filed the wrong monthly salary amount, plunging her into a financial crisis. The error was not fixed for two months. "The whole system is … an absolute shambles," Emily said. "They are causing more hardship."

Jennifer, a single mother of two who works in a school canteen, had her benefits delayed because the system could not adapt to her being paid every four weeks, rather than monthly. In one message she wrote to the UC system, she said: "Is there a crisis place that can help me with school uniform or school dinners? My cooker's broken. I have £76 in my account to do me - all bills, shopping … I don't understand why I am worse off on universal credit. It's horrible. Never been this skint in my life."

> **350**
> *The number of low-paid workers every day raising complaints about errors in welfare top-up payments*

If each complaint came from a single claimant it would mean one in 18 working welfare claimants have raised complaints in the last year. More will have been affected without raising it formally. The researchers described this as a "high level of error" with a "huge human impact".

The researchers are calling for more human contact in the system plus "a public register that describes any systems or algorithms that are used in the delivery of UC to make this process transparent".

The DWP was approached for comment.

Eyewitness



▲ *The French model Simone D'Aillencourt at Cape Canaveral, Florida, 1959*
PHOTOGRAPH: RICHARD AVEDON

▼ *From Libido Uprising, 1989, a series of images by a feminist artist and activist*
JO SPENCE





▶ *Blast #5707 – a controlled explosion in a limestone quarry*
NAOYA HATAKEYAMA



▲ *Longing for Love, 2018, from the series A Myth of Two Souls*
VASANTHA YOGANANTHAN

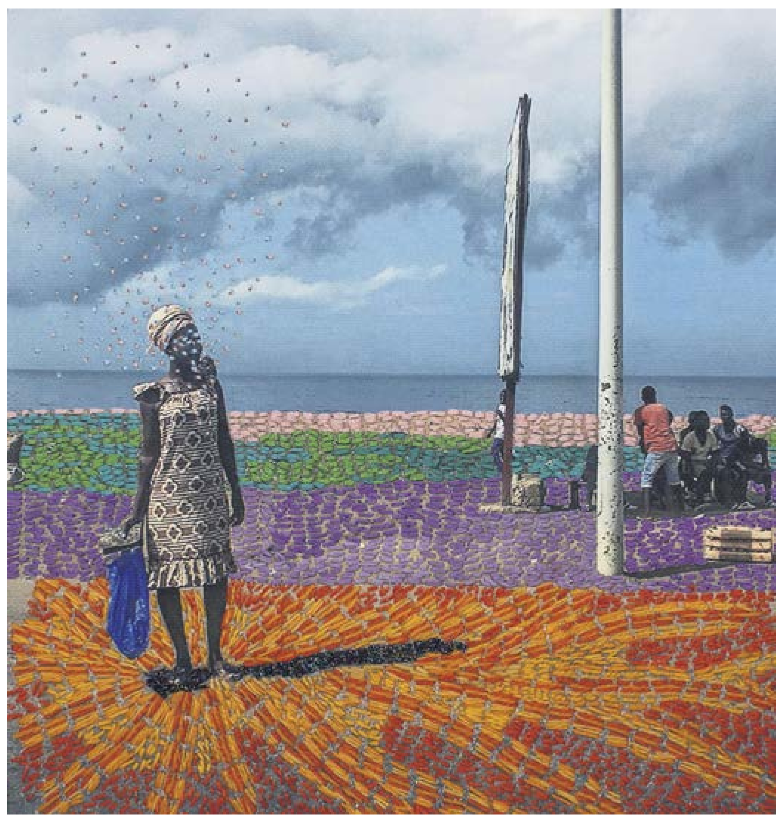


▶ *Big Bang (1986) reflects the economic confidence of 1980s London*
BRIAN GRIFFIN



▼ *Architect's image of a gallery at the V&A Photography Centre, which will exhibit about 600 artworks*
GIBSON THORNLEY





▶ *Sans Titre 5 by an artist who lives and works in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire*
JOANA CHOUMALI





▼ *Riot Girl, 1998, by a photographer who documents marginalised communities*
VINCA PETERSEN

Review

The history of an art form – and our world

Photography Centre
V&A, London
★★★★☆

Chloë Ashby

Paul Trevor's Constant Exposure, a patchwork print of black-and-white television stills, looks just like life in the age of the smartphone, it was created back in the 1980s. A news anchor, a war plane dropping bombs and bare breasts are among the multitude of jumbled images. Standing in front of it in the V&A's new Photography Centre, I can't help but laugh – here I am contemplating a work about the everyday onslaught of pictures in a suite of galleries filled with them.

But that's the thing. While out in the real world images come at you hot and heavy, in here they offer a respite, access to another time and place. Spread across seven 19th-century galleries are 600 works out of the museum's 800,000-strong collection that stretch from the 1840s to today. There's a lot – a lot of images and a lot of labels – but take your time and you'll be duly rewarded.

The first couple of galleries opened in 2018 and have been rehung with a focus on energy in photography. That's as vague as it sounds, but the outcome is less muddled than you might think. I find myself lingering in front of Adolphe Braun's still life of jostling flowers mid-bloom, and William Henry Fox Talbot's delicate depictions of leaves and ferns. My favourite: the ghostly sciagraphs of reptiles taken by James Green and James H Gardiner in 1897, soon after X-rays were discovered.

Captured on camera are advances in cars, trains, planes. Disasters both natural (the eruption of Mount Vesuvius) and not (the atomic bomb). Unfolding chronologically, the display unravels the history of both photography and the world.

The Zizi Show (2020-23) by Jake Elwes is an all-singing, all-dancing deepfake drag cabaret that draws attention to the bias in AI.

If you're still not sure about how cameras work, you'll find out in the final room, where you can experience the camera obscura. Step into a light room and your image is projected upside down on the wall of a dark room. A reminder that the things we encounter every day on our smartphones aren't exactly as they appear.

The Photography Centre at the V&A, London, opens on Thursday


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Tim Scott
Republican makes bid for party nomination
Page 26

Sweet victory
Australia wins battle over mānuka honey
Page 27





'This has already taken place several times and nothing has been done'

Carlo Ancelotti
Real Madrid manager

◀ *Vinícius Júnior points to the stands during Sunday's match in Valencia*
PHOTOGRAPH: JOSE BRETTON/NURPHOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK

Racist abuse of Real Madrid star investigated by officials in Spain



▲ *Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva called for La Liga to take 'serious measures'*
PHOTOGRAPH: LOUISE DELMOTTE/AP

Tom Phillips *Rio de Janeiro*
Jon Henley

Spanish prosecutors opened an investigation yesterday over racist chants hurled at Real Madrid's Brazilian forward Vinícius Júnior during the club's match on Sunday, as the head of Spain's football federation admitted the country had a "problem" with racism.

The prosecutor's office in the eastern city of Valencia, where the match took place, is investigating the incident as a possible "hate crime", judicial sources said, after Luis Rubiales of the Royal Spanish Football Federation called for zero tolerance.

Officials, players and former players in Brazil and Spain showed solidarity with the 22-year-old Vinícius, who considered leaving the field after facing racist taunts from fans during Real Madrid's 1-0 loss at Valencia in the Spanish league.

"We have a problem of behaviour, of education, of racism," Rubiales said. "And as long as there is one fan or one group of fans making insults based on someone's sexual orientation or skin colour or belief, then we have a serious problem."

Valencia said it had banned one of its fans for life and was looking to identify others. "The club has analysed all the available footage, working alongside the authorities as rapidly as possible to clarify what happened," it said in a statement.

Real Madrid said it strongly condemned the incident, which it believed to be a hate crime.

"These events represent a direct attack on the social and democratic model of coexistence of our state based on the rule of law," it said. Speaking after the match, Real Madrid's Italian manager, Carlo Ancelotti, said the racist abuse highlighted how "something bad is happening in this league".

The Spanish league has made nine similar formal complaints for racist abuse against Vinícius over the last two seasons, most of which have been shelved.

Fans have been fined and banned from stadiums, but so far only a Mallorca supporter may end up going on trial for allegedly racially insulting the Brazilian during a game.

The first-ever trial of a supporter accused of racial abuse in Spanish professional football is expected to take place later this year in a case involving the Athletic Bilbao forward Iñaki Williams, who was allegedly racially abused by an Espanyol supporter during a match in 2020.

"Nothing will happen because this has already taken place several times in other stadiums and nothing has been done - nothing," Ancelotti said yesterday. "We have to evaluate this situation because it is very serious."

Vinícius himself claimed Spain was now known "as a country of racists" in Brazil.

"Racism is normal in La Liga," he wrote on Twitter. "This championship which was once that of Ronaldinho, Ronaldo, Cristiano and Messi now is that of racists."

Brazil's president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, called on Fifa and La Liga to take "serious measures" after Sunday's scenes at Valencia's Mestalla stadium. "We cannot allow fascism and racism to seize control of football stadiums," Lula said.

"It's unjust that a poor kid who's done so well in life, who may be on his way to becoming the best in the world - he's certainly the best at Real Madrid - gets insulted at every stadium where he plays," the Brazilian president said in Japan, where he was attending the G7 summit.

Cabinet members including the justice minister, Flávio Dino, also demanded action from Spanish authorities. "This is deplorable, unacceptable and there must be consequences," Dino tweeted.

Vinícius also received widespread support from within football. The Madrid goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois said he heard "monkey noises" after about 20 minutes of the game, adding that he would have walked off with the Brazilian if he had chosen to stop playing. "We cannot tolerate these things," Courtois said.

The French forward Kylian Mbappé posted: "You're not alone."

Fifa's president, Gianni Infantino, expressed his solidarity with Vinícius. "There is no place for racism in football or in society and Fifa stands by all players who have found themselves in such a situation," he said.

Former players were also outraged. The former England defender Rio Ferdinand asked how many more times Vinícius would be "subjected to this shit. I see pain, I see disgust, I see him needing help … and the authorities don't do shit," he said.

The former Brazil striker Ronaldo, who spent five seasons at Real Madrid in the 2000s, said: "Another case of racism against Vinícius in the Spanish league. Until when? As long as there is impunity, there will be racism."

Javier Tebas, the Spanish league president, hit out at Vinícius for attacking La Liga, saying the player had not shown up for talks on the subject of racism that he had requested himself.

Vinícius was highly critical of Tebas's stance. "The image of your championship is shaken … All your omission achieves is making you equal to the racists … I want action and punishment," wrote the player - who was eventually sent off after being held in a headlock by a Valencia player.

Additional reporting
Associated Press

Anti-Kremlin Russian forces claim to have seized village in cross-border raid

Andrew Roth

Fighting broke out along the Russian border with Ukraine yesterday after self-described Russian partisan forces launched a cross-border raid and claimed to have overrun a border village for the first time in the war.

The Freedom of Russia Legion, which describes itself as an anti-Kremlin militia seeking to liberate Russia from Vladimir Putin, claimed to have crossed the border and overrun the village of Kozinka, while sending units into the town of Grayvoron in Russia's Belgorod region.

It was not clear how many people had been injured in the fighting, which continued into the evening. Footage of the raid, purportedly from a border checkpoint in Grayvoron, showed casualties, including a Russian officer lying facedown in a pool of blood next to Russian passports and other scattered documents. The video also showed armoured vehicles appearing to overrun the post.

Another anti-Kremlin militia, the Russian Volunteer Corps, which is led by a prominent Russian nationalist, also said it had taken part in the raid. Late yesterday, it released video footage showing what it said was a fighter inspecting a captured armoured vehicle.

Smoke was also reported after unconfirmed reports that a drone had been used to drop explosives on an office of the FSB security service.

The chaos in the Belgorod region, where local authorities announced a "counter-terrorist regime" yesterday evening, was a rare case where Russian villages have come face-to-face with a conflict that the country's army has unleashed across Ukraine.

Both Russian and Ukrainian officials confirmed fighting at the border.

Any capture of territory was not independently confirmed. "We are the same Russians as you," said the group in a post on social media. "We are distinguished only by the fact that we no longer wanted to justify the actions of criminals in power and took up arms to defend our and your freedom. But today it's time for everyone to take responsibility for their future. It's time to put an end to the Kremlin's dictatorship."

Social media video showed a Russian Mi-8 helicopter trailing flares over Kozinka and smoke rising from the settlement with the sounds of emergency sirens clearly audible.

Hundreds of cars were filmed being driven out of the area. "Something terrifying is happening," said a woman filming from her window in Kozinka as a helicopter dropped flares to try to divert missiles.

The governor of the Belgorod region confirmed the attack, writing that "a sabotage and reconnaissance group of the armed forces of Ukraine have entered the territory of the Grayvoron district. The armed forces of the Russian Federation, together with the border service, Rosgvardiya [national guard] and the FSB, are taking the necessary measures to eliminate the enemy."

The Kremlin said Putin had been informed of the cross-border incursion, adding that Moscow believed the attack was designed to "divert attention" from Bakhmut, the Ukrainian city where Russia is tightening its grip.

Ukraine has denied being linked to the Russian partisan fighters, saying that they act independently and are not subject to military control.

"Yes, today the Russian Volunteer Corps and the Freedom of Russia Legion, which consist of citizens of the Russian Federation, have launched an operation to liberate these territories of the Belgorod region from the so-called Putin regime and push back the enemy in order to create a certain security zone to protect the Ukrainian civilian population," Andriy Yusov, a spokesperson for Ukraine's military intelligence, told Ukrainian media.

The US and other western powers have supplied weapons to Ukraine with the caveat that they must not be used to strike targets inside Russia. Ukraine has denied any connection to past attacks on Russian territory, including strikes that have hit Russian airfields, energy infrastructure, and even the drone attack on the Kremlin earlier this month.

It is not clear if the raid was part of a sustained military strategy or meant as a diversionary strike, as expectations remain that Ukraine is preparing to launch a summer counteroffensive to retake territory occupied by Russia.

'We are the same Russians as you … It's time to end Putin's dictatorship'

Freedom of Russia Legion



Moscow tightens grip on devastated Bakhmut but experts question if Wagner has fought its last

Dan Sabbagh
Defence and security editor

Russia appeared close to taking control of Bakhmut yesterday, although Ukraine said it continued to fight on in the south-west fringes of the city largely devastated after an intense year of deadly fighting.

Hanna Mailar, Ukraine's deputy defence minister, said Ukraine still controlled "certain facilities" in the Litak district, but reports said the defenders had lost control of the last of the remaining high-rise blocks in the eastern Ukrainian city.

Ukraine has switched its primary focus to engaging in limited counter-attacks on the higher ground to the immediate north-west and south of the ruined city, which could be used to threaten the Russian attackers below.

"The offensive potential of the enemy has been significantly reduced, huge losses have been inflicted on the enemy," Mailar said. She added: "We have gained time for certain actions, which will be discussed later."

Bakhmut was first shelled in May 2022 and Russian forces consistently targeted the mining city that had a pre-war population of about 70,000. Although not considered of particular strategic importance, the city has acquired a high symbolic value for both sides in the conflict.

Ukrainian and Russian soldiers fought building by building in the most intense fighting seen in Europe since the second world war, with Russia taking a year to advance about 24km on the Bakhmut sector of the eastern Donbas, a front that has otherwise remained relatively static since last autumn.

The effort was led by the Russian mercenary Wagner group, using seasoned veterans to command a large number of former prisoners. But experts question whether, as the battle draws to an end, Wagner can continue to fight further.

The Institute for the Study of War said on Sunday night that it believed Wagner's offensive was likely to be at its culmination point and that "it is unlikely that Wagner will continue fighting beyond Bakhmut at its current depleted state".

Joe Biden, the US president, said at the G7 summit in Japan that Russia had suffered 100,000 casualties, killed and wounded, in fighting for the city, higher than previous Ukrainian estimates of 70,000.

Ukraine does not release casualty figures but it is believed to have lost tens of thousands in the protracted struggle.

Wagner's chief, Yevgeny Prigozhin, declared on Saturday that Bakhmut had fallen, filming himself at the city's battered railway station a few kilometres behind the frontline.

Other video footage showed Russian troops waving flags at the western edge of the city, although not in the Litak district still being fought over.

At that point, Prigozhin announced Wagner forces would withdraw from the city by Thursday, leaving its defence to regular Russian troops, although it was unclear whether that was a firm declaration of intent, or a feint designed to lure Ukrainian forces back into attacking the city.

Attacking forces are often



▲ *Aerial footage reveals the extent of devastation in Bakhmut, where opposing forces have been involved in the most intense fighting since the second world war*

PHOTOGRAPH: ARMED FORCES OF UKRAINE/ AFP/GETTY IMAGES



Source: the Institute for the Study of War with AEI's Critical Threats Project.

considered at their most vulnerable at the culmination of an advance, usually due to combat exhaustion, and Ukraine has been hinting that it hopes to surround the invaders in the city by attacking to the north and south.

But the Ukrainian counterattacks remain relatively limited so far, and the expectation is that Kyiv will soon launch a more significant assault as the weather improves, using about 12 brigades of troops, many of which have been equipped with western tanks, fighting vehicles and artillery.

Three civilians were killed and 14 injured across Ukraine in overnight shelling while the country's air force said it had shot down four cruise missiles and 20 drones. But the air force spokesperson Yuri Inhat said Ukraine did not "have enough means" – air defences – to deal with high-speed ballistic missiles across the country.

Ukraine said it had reconnected the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant to its external power supply after a brief outage that had left it reliant on emergency generators.

Backup diesel generators were in use for a time at the site, to ensure nuclear fuel was kept cool and prevent a potential disaster.

It is the seventh time during the war that the nuclear power plant, Europe's biggest, has had to switch to backup power. Russian forces seized the plant early in the war.

China and Saudi Arabia boycott G20 meeting in Kashmir hosted by India

Patrick Wintour
Diplomatic editor

India's presidency of the G20 group of leading nations has become mired in controversy after China and Saudi Arabia boycotted a meeting in Kashmir, the first such gathering since India unilaterally brought Kashmir under direct control in August 2019.

The meeting, a tourism working group attended by about 60 delegates from most G20 countries and taking place from yesterday until tomorrow, required a large show of security at Srinagar international airport.

The Indian government stripped the disputed Muslim-majority region of semi-autonomy in 2019 and split it into two federal territories in an attempt to integrate it fully into India.

Indian authorities hoped the Kashmir meeting would show the controversial changes had brought "peace and prosperity" to the region and that it was a safe place for tourists.

India's elite National Security Guard, including its counter-drone unit and marine commandos, were helping police and paramilitary forces to secure the event venues.

China said it would not attend, citing its firm opposition "to holding any kind of G20 meetings in disputed territory". In April, Pakistan, which also lays claim to Kashmir but is not a G20 member, described the meeting as irresponsible. Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Indonesia were also expected to stay away.

The former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Mehbooba Mufti said India had turned the region into the equivalent of the Guantánamo Bay prison simply to hold a meeting on tourism. She also accused the Bharatiya Janata party – the party of the prime minister, Narendra Modi – of hijacking the G20 for its promotional purposes.

Last week Fernand de Varennes, the UN's special rapporteur on minority issues, issued a statement saying the G20 was "unwittingly providing a veneer of support to a facade of normalcy" when human rights violations, political persecution and illegal arrests were escalating in Kashmir. He said the meeting risked normalising what some have described as a military occupation. The statement was criticised as baseless by India's permanent mission at the UN in Geneva. It was India's prerogative to hold G20 meetings in any part of the country, the mission said.

India divided the state of Jammu and Kashmir into two federally



▲ *Narendra Modi has been criticised over alleged rights abuses in Kashmir*

administered territories – Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. Ladakh is a disputed region along the line of actual control between India and China. Both countries claim parts of it.

The chief coordinator for India's G20 presidency, Harsh Vardhan Shringla, said on Sunday: "We have the highest representation from foreign delegations for the tourism working group meeting in Srinagar …

"Our experience is that in any working group meeting, to get such a large turnout of delegates not only from G20 countries but also from international organisations that are part of the G20, is an incredible process. If you have to do a working group on tourism in India, we have to do it in Srinagar. There is no option."

Britain's high commissioner to India, Alex Ellis, said UK representatives would be attending the meeting.

At a meeting between Modi and Rishi Sunak, at the G7 in Hiroshima, the two sides discussed progress on reaching a free trade deal.

India remains angry at what it regards as a lax UK police reaction to an attack on the Indian high commission in London on 19 March by pro-Khalistan extremists. Security outside the commission has been stepped up.

The presidency of the G20 is rotated between members each year. The Indian presidency was always likely to prove controversial as India has close trading links with Russia and the Modi administration is keen to protect Russia from criticism by western members of the G20 over its invasion of Ukraine.

Kyiv has asked to attend a summit in September but the Indian government is arguing that Ukraine is not relevant to the state of the world economy – the central purpose of the G20 – or to its chosen key agenda items of inclusive growth, debt restructuring and climate finance.

Russia's president, Vladimir Putin, did not attend the G20 summit staged by Indonesia last year but instead sent his foreign minister, Sergei Lavrov.

Beijing hits out at 'smear and attack' after critical G7 warning

Helen Davidson
Taipei

Beijing has accused the G7 nations of collaborating to "smear and attack" China, after the weekend summit issued a communique that warned Beijing over its "militarisation activities" in the Asia-Pacific region.

After the summit, China summoned the Japanese ambassador to register an official protest, and warned the UK to stop "slandering" the country to avoid further damage to bilateral relations. Chinese regulators also announced that a US chip firm, Micron Technology, had failed a security review and would be banned from use in Chinese critical infrastructure.

The G7 communique, issued on Saturday, stated that it wanted "constructive and stable relations" with Beijing, referring to "de-risking" rather than "de-coupling" from their relationship with China amid warnings from France that the summit should not be seen as being anti-Beijing. But it also outlined key concerns over militarisation in the East and South China seas, China's intentions towards Taiwan, and human rights infringements in Xinjiang and Tibet.

The leaders of the Quad group – Australia, India, Japan and the US – also called for "peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific maritime domain".

"We strongly oppose destabilising or unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo by force," the statement said, using diplomatic language that appeared to refer to China's economic tactics to gain leverage over poorer countries and also its military expansion in the Pacific.

In response, China on Saturday accused the G7 of "hindering international peace, undermining regional stability and curbing other countries' development".

Yesterday China's deputy foreign minister, Sun Weidong, summoned the Japanese ambassador to register an official protest over what the ministry called the "hype around China-related issues" at the summit. Sun claimed Japan had collaborated with other countries "to smear and attack China, grossly interfering in China's internal affairs".

He said Japan's actions were detrimental to China's sovereignty, security and development interests.

Japanese officials said their country's position on China had been consistent, while Hideo Tarumi, the Japanese ambassador to China, said the G7 would continue to refer to issues of common concern as long as China does not change its behaviour, according to a statement.

On Sunday, the Chinese embassy in Britain hit back at comments by the UK prime minister, Rishi Sunak, saying China represented the world's greatest challenge to security and prosperity, but that other leading economies should not decouple from it. The embassy statement asked the UK government to stop slandering and "parroting words from others" to avoid further damage to relations.

Additional reporting **Reuters**

Senator joins race to win Republican nomination

Joan E Greve
Washington

The South Carolina senator Tim Scott formally launched his presidential campaign yesterday, joining a growing field of Republican candidates looking to capture their party's nomination and rob Donald Trump of another opportunity to face off against Joe Biden next year.

"Under President Biden, our nation is retreating away from patriotism and faith," Scott told a cheering crowd at Charleston Southern University. "Joe Biden and the radical left are attacking every rung of the ladder that helped me climb. And that is why I am announcing today that I am running for president of the United States of America."

As the only black Republican serving in the US Senate, Scott argued he had a unique perspective to offer on how conservative policies could best serve the American people, and he leaned into his optimistic vision for the future of the country. Scott's mother joined him on stage at his campaign event.

"We live in the land where it is absolutely possible for a kid raised in poverty in a single-parent household in a small apartment to one day serve in the people's house and maybe even the White House," Scott said.

Senior campaign officials have said Scott's funds would help him break out in a primary field where he has struggled to gain national recognition. The most recent Morning Consult poll showed Scott drawing the support of just 1% of Republican primary voters across the country. The South Carolina survey showed Scott trailing behind Trump, the Florida governor, Ron DeSantis, and the former UN ambassador Nikki Haley.

Although Scott has attempted to work across the aisle on criminal justice issues, he remains staunchly conservative. He received an A-rating from the Gun Owners of America last year, and has vowed to sign the "most conservative pro-life legislation" that can pass Congress if he becomes president.



▲ *Tim Scott on stage with his mother, Frances* PHOTOGRAPH: MEG KINNARD/AP

Biden to meet McCarthy in effort to avoid US debt default

Martin Pengelly

Joe Biden was to meet the Republican House speaker, Kevin McCarthy, late yesterday as he sought to avoid a potentially catastrophic US debt default, which the Treasury secretary, Janet Yellen, has said would happen on or about 1 June without a deal to raise the $31.4tn (£25.2tn) debt ceiling.

If the debt limit is not raised, the US government will default on its bills in a historic first. Federal workers would be furloughed, global stock markets could crash and the US economy would probably drop into recession.

McCarthy leads a Republican caucus demanding harsh spending cuts from the US president in return for raising the ceiling. Democrats fear Republicans are willing to allow the talks to fail, thereby pitching the US and world economies into chaos, seeing it as a price worth paying for beating Biden at the polls next year.

$31.4tn

The current US debt ceiling. House Republicans are seeking harsh cuts in exchange for lifting the debt cap

In a message seen by the Guardian yesterday, a senior Democratic Senate staffer predicted disaster.

"I think we will" default, they said. "I think most House Republicans want a default so even if McCarthy could make a deal he won't have the votes to pass it."

Biden has said he will consider cuts but has called Republican demands "unacceptable", for example saying he will not back subsidies for big energy companies and "wealthy tax cheats" while putting at risk healthcare and food assistance.

The debt ceiling was imposed in 1917 as a response by Congress to US entry into the first world war. For most of the next century, raising the ceiling was a formal process. Under Donald Trump, Republicans raised the ceiling three times while adding to rising debt with higher spending and tax cuts for richer Americans.

Now, drawing inspiration from a 2011 standoff in which House Republicans extracted major concessions from Barack Obama, Republicans are casting themselves as budget hawks.

Additional reporting **Reuters**

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▼ *Greece's prime minister, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, outside the presidential mansion in Athens yesterday*
PHOTOGRAPH: ORESTIS PANAGIOTOU/EPA



Greek PM pushes for repeat poll rather than coalition after vote leaves him short of majority

Helena Smith
Athens

Riding high on an election victory few expected, Greece's prime minister has said he will push for a repeat poll "as soon as possible" after a landslide win that left the centre-right leader short of a parliamentary majority under a new voting system.

Hours after his New Democracy party clinched almost 41% of the vote – 20 percentage points ahead of its main rival, the leftwing Syriza, Kyriakos Mitsotakis said he would not waste time trying to form a coalition government.

"I believe the message of the ballot is very clear," he told the president, Katerina Sakellaropoulou, adding it was impossible to form a new government under the current parliament. "I intend to return the exploratory mandate this afternoon. We will proceed to elections as soon as possible."

A follow-up poll could be held on 25 June, he said.

As head of state, Sakellaropoulou had been due to hand Mitsotakis a three-day mandate to explore whether he could forge a governing alliance in the Greek parliament.

Under a new electoral system of proportional representation, New Democracy fell five seats short of a majority in Athens' 300-seat house despite an extraordinary victory in which the party not only routed its opponent but exceeded its landslide result in 2019, when Mitsotakis ousted the Syriza leader, Alexis Tsipras. The leftwing party won just over 20%, posting what Tsipras described as "an extremely negative result".

Under the constitution, the president must pass the mandate to the second and third parties – Syriza and the centre-left Pasok – if the winning party fails to form a government. But with Pasok ruling out an alliance and Syriza facing almost impossible parliamentary arithmetic, the prospect of all three mandates being returned was seen as a foregone conclusion, in which case the president would need to appoint a caretaker administration until elections are held.

Before Sunday's vote, Mitsotakis, 55, had urged Greeks to give him the mandate that would allow him to form a single-party government that could implement an ambitious reform programme. The next ballot, crucially, will take place under an electoral system of reinforced representation that will grant the winning party as many as 50 bonus seats.

It had been thought the governing party's popularity had been severely dented by a phone-tapping scandal and a devastating train crash. But Syriza's unexpectedly poor performance appeared to uphold the view that Greeks had voted for stability.

In an election dominated by anxiety over the cost of living, Greeks singled out the economy, citing memories of the country's debt drama a decade ago and the austerity meted out in return for emergency funds.

Tsipras said a new poll would be a chance to "reverse the prospect of an uncontrollable ruling prime minister", adding that Syriza was not only "here to stay" but the role of the left in Greece's political life was at stake. "I am here and I am not going to abandon the battle in the middle, no less, of a difficult fight," he said.

Ringing endorsement for rescuing economy

If voters handed the prime minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis's conservative New Democracy party a 20-point win on Sunday, it was at least partly because they credited him with steering Greece to economic safety.

Three bailouts totalling €280bn (£243bn) averted disaster during a decade-long crisis that peaked in 2015, and Greece only emerged last summer from a draconian regime of spending controls ordered by its international lenders.

The human cost was immense. Unemployment peaked at 27.5% – and at 58% for the under-25s – as Greece's economy shrank by 25% in what economists now agree was a downturn as hard as the Great Depression of the 1930s in the US.

In the five years from 2008 to 2013, Greeks became on average 40% poorer, according to data from the country's statistical agency analysed by Reuters. By 2014, disposable household income in Greece had sunk below 2003 levels.

With unemployment soaring, many households became reliant on the pensions of older family members to survive – but repeated cuts left 45% of pensioners receiving monthly payments below the poverty line of €665 by 2015.

That year, one in five Greeks were assessed as experiencing severe material deprivation, more than double the 2008 figure, and almost 4 million people as being "at risk of poverty or social exclusion".

An estimated 800,000 Greeks had no access to medical treatment after losing their health insurance through unemployment during the crisis. Cases of severe depression almost trebled and, according to a study in the British Medical Journal, the suicide rate rose by 35%. Greece also suffered a devastating brain drain: a 2013 study found more than 120,000 professionals had left since 2010.

In his first four-year term, Mitsotakis – a 55-year-old Harvard-educated former banker – oversaw unexpectedly high growth, a steep fall in unemployment and a country on course to regain its investment-grade credit rating after years of "junk" status.

Greece is a long way from where it was a decade ago, and for that, voters appear to have thanked Mitsotakis.
Jon Henley

New Zealand apiarists lose rights battle over mānuka honey label

Tess McClure
Auckland

New Zealand honey producers have lost their latest battle to trademark mānuka honey, the latest blow in a years-long fight to stop Australian beekeepers using the lucrative name.

The Intellectual Property Office of New Zealand ruled yesterday that an attempt for a trademark by New Zealand mānuka beekeepers did not meet necessary requirements, and the term mānuka was descriptive.

Mānuka refers to a white-flowered tree that grows in New Zealand and Australia – although it is more widely known as a type of "tea tree" in Australia. The bees that browse its tiny pale blooms produce a kind of honey known for antibacterial and supposed health properties – and which fetches a significant price markup on the international market as a result.

At the highest concentrations, some New Zealand batches have sold for up to $5,000 (£2,500) for a 250g jar at luxury stores overseas. The lucrative nature of the product has been responsible for fierce competition over access to mānuka forests in New Zealand, in some cases resulting in mass poisonings of bees, thefts, vandalism and beatings.

For more than a decade, however, Australia and its Pacific neighbour have been at loggerheads over use of the mānuka name – a Māori word, which New Zealand argues is an indigenous treasure, uniquely associated with its own honey production.

Pita Tipene, the chair of the Mānuka Charitable Trust, said the trademark decision was "disappointing in so many ways". He said the trust would regroup before continuing its battle.

"If anything, it has made us more determined to protect what is ours on behalf of all New Zealanders and consumers who value authenticity," he said. "Our role as *kaitiaki* [guardians] to protect the *mana* [dignity] and value of our *taonga* [treasured] species, including mānuka, on behalf of all New Zealanders is not contestable."

Australian industry players welcomed the decision as a "commonsense outcome" and said they planned to grow international sales in response to rising demand.



▲ *Mānuka honey can fetch up to £2,500 for a 250g jar at luxury stores*

▼ *Toronto rises up behind the Don River Valley Park. The city invested millions to rejuvenate the waterway*
PHOTOGRAPH: JIMFENG/GETTY/ISTOCKPHOTO



And quiet flows the Don - again

Grassroots action sees Toronto's unloved river rise from the dead

Leyland Cecco
Toronto

After decades of illness, including a cholera scare and bouts of malaria, Toronto's Don River succumbed to mounting neglect and was pronounced dead in 1969.

A funeral procession of environmental activists wound through the city, with mourners gathering at the polluted banks of the river to pay their final respects.

After more than half a century, however, the river has roared back to life. Wildlife is gingerly returning to areas that were once the site of heavy industry. Its waters will soon become cleaner. And perhaps most unlikely of all: after decades of campaigning by a group of local people, the city is spending billions to save a body of water which was long despised and feared.

Unlike other rivers bisecting a major city, the waterway, named after the River Don in Yorkshire, is neither revered nor loved. On most days, it is little more than an overgrown creek, occasionally morphing into a torrent of turbid waters in a rainstorm.

Indigenous peoples, including the Anishinaabe, Seneca and Mississauga, would fish its shores. But the thick and wild ravine system the river flows through was hard to navigate, pushing early inhabitants westward.

For most of Toronto's urban history, it was a dumping ground, said Jennifer Bonnell, an associate professor of history at Toronto's York University. Tanneries, distilleries and abattoirs discharged effluent into the river and dead livestock could be found drifting in the murky water.

Walking past a lush mix of trees and marshes on a former brownfield site, Bonnell said: "Because of its proximity to the city, it served as a kind of place for refuge, and with that a place that you could get lost - but also a place where you could get injured or mugged."

When he moved from a rural American community to Toronto in 1972, John Wilson was struck by the "beautiful loneliness" of the river, which he accessed by scaling chain link fences.

Drawn in by the burgeoning conservation movement, Wilson committed himself to fighting for the river. "I looked around at this and realised we could do better," he said.

Wilson became a key figure in the Task Force to Bring Back the Don, a citizen-led group that took a hands-on approach to mending the broken river.

> *'We want to see it swimmable ... and fish that are healthy and even edible'*
>
> **Sameer Dhalla** *Toronto conservation authority*



▲ *Teenagers help with a clean-up of the 'dumping ground' Don River in 1971, when its waters stank of raw sewage* PHOTOGRAPH: MARIO GEO/TORONTO STAR/GETTY

The group restored wetlands, cleaned its banks and reduced the city's use of road salt, which invariably flowed into the river each winter. But the group, staffed largely with volunteers, was dissolved in 2010 by the then Toronto mayor, Rob Ford.

Now, however, one of the group's main goals, the restoration of the river's mouth, is nearing completion after the city invested more than C$1bn (£594m) to create wetlands, levees and a new route for the Don.

The project, led by Waterfront Toronto, will add 3 hectares (7.4 acres) of new coastal wetland and 4 hectares of habitat in a space that was once a post-industrial wasteland.

During construction, which is due to finish in a few months, beavers, minks, bald eagles, deer and coyotes have been spotted in the area. The project also creates a more natural meander to the river, overturning human attempts to "straitjacket" it, said Bonnell.

But the biggest change is coming to the river itself. In the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's (TRCA) most recent water-quality report, the most heavily urbanised portion of the Don River scored an "F" for its elevated levels of phosphorus, nutrients, chlorides, salt and *E coli*, said Sameer Dhalla, the director of development and engineering services at the TRCA.

Nearly a quarter of Toronto has an outdated system of piping that combines storm runoff with raw sewage, spilling into the river when rain hits the city.

The city is spending C$3bn to build three tunnels that will route untreated sewage away from the river - the largest and costliest project of its kind in Canada. When all three tunnels are completed in the next 15 years, it will mark an end to sewer overflows.

"We're going to really see substantial benefits in the lower Don's water quality once they deal with all these combined sewer overflows," said Dhalla. "We want to see the Don River swimmable. We want to see that the fish are healthy and even edible."

Bonnell says the rerouting of the sewage will be "revolutionary" for a river pushed to its limits - a once unimaginable outcome that highlights the resilience of natural systems.

The confluence of nature and urbanisation nearly always leads in one direction, from vitality to destruction. But the fate of the Don, prematurely declared dead more than half a century ago, suggests that with sustained grassroots effort - and both political and financial willpower - that seemingly inevitable trajectory can be changed.

"There aren't a lot of hopeful signs in the wider world today. But it's hard not to want to hope for a better life for my children and future generations," said Wilson. "And so you have to hold on, as hard as you can, to the positive things that you can see, and to those around you. This is one of them."

In brief

China

Comic's social media accounts suspended

The British-Malaysian comic Uncle Roger has had his social media accounts in China suspended.

The comedian, whose name is Nigel Ng, said his Bilibili and Weibo accounts had been suspended due to a "violation of relevant laws and regulations", suggesting it was due to a video clip he had posted on western social media.

In the clip, Uncle Roger asks an audience member where he comes from. The man says "Guangzhou, China"; he replies "Good country!" and adds: "We have to say that now, correct? ... this nephew got Huawei phone, they all listening."
Chi Hui Lin and Helen Davidson



Sudan

Weeklong truce agreed to allow delivery of aid

A weeklong ceasefire in Sudan intended to allow the delivery of humanitarian aid was due to come into effect last night, after world powers put pressure on the army and the rival paramilitary Rapid Support Forces to sign a deal.

The agreement to halt six weeks of fighting was announced by the US and Saudi Arabia. Previous attempts at a truce have fallen apart.

Fighting in Sudan has pitted the country's army, led by Gen Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, against the RSF, led by Burhan's former deputy, Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo.
Zeinab Mohammed Salih *Khartoum*

Ireland

Alcoholic drinks to get health warning labels

Ireland is to become the first country in the world to mandate health labelling on alcoholic drinks to alert people to calorie content, grams of alcohol, risks of cancer and liver disease and the dangers of drinking while pregnant. The law will take effect from 22 May 2026.

The European Commission did not object to the scheme despite protests from Italy, Spain and six other EU states. Italy's biggest farmers' body, Coldiretti, said the EU's approval of "alarmist wine labels" risked "opening the door to other legislation capable of negatively influencing consumer choices". **Rory Carroll** *Dublin*

FTSE 100	All share	Dow Indl	Nikkei 225	£/€	£/$
+14.12	+5.89	-112.34	+278.47	1.1501	1.2420
7770.99	4234.14	33314.29	31086.82	-0.0030	-0.0018

Business

Private renters twice as likely to be struggling with serious debt

Rupert Jones

Private renters are almost twice as likely to be struggling with problem levels of debt than the general population, with a sharp rise in the numbers in serious financial difficulty since January, research shows.

The figures come as private rents in the UK hit record highs, and days after the government unveiled a shake-up of the sector to tackle the "injustices" that many tenants are facing.

The debt charity StepChange, which issued the polling data, said that "with so many renters in financial difficulty" stronger protections for those who fell behind with their rent were required.

It said that while the renters' reform bill unveiled last week was welcome, it did not go far enough.

The private rented sector was now "unaffordable, inaccessible and insecure for those on the lowest incomes, leaving them at high risk of problem debt, poor mental and physical health and prolonged housing insecurity", the charity said.

It also published a YouGov poll showing that 15% of private renters – 1.1 million people as of this month – were in problem debt, compared with 8% of the wider population. The charity added that this number had risen by more than a third since January.

Signs of financial difficulty include using credit, loans or an overdraft to make it through to payday, falling behind on essential household bills, using credit to keep up with existing credit commitments, and getting hit by late payment or default charges, said StepChange, with those in severe problem debt typically displaying three or more of those signs.

The research also found that half of all private renters – about 3.7 million people – had their rent increased in the last 12 months, while more than 1.2 million said they were using credit to make ends meet.

Many have described the private rented sector as being in crisis, which Michael Gove, the housing secretary, appeared to acknowledge last week when he said that "too many renters are living in damp, unsafe, cold homes, powerless to put things right, and with the threat of sudden eviction hanging over them".

The number of households renting in England more than doubled between 2001 and 2021, the latest census revealed, and a string of surveys have indicated that private rents have hit new highs. Meanwhile, experts say that severe shortages of rental properties have led to intense competition for what is available, with queues for viewings, desperate renters paying over the odds, and some landlords asking for a year's rent in advance.

> *'Too many renters are living in damp, unsafe, cold homes'*
>
> **Michael Gove**
> *Housing secretary*

StepChange's report stated that one in five private renters who had tried to find a new home in the last 12 months said they were asked to pay more than two months' rent in advance. More than half had been asked to bid on the property and just 28% were successful.

The charity's client survey found private renters "struggled with the affordability of their homes more than any other housing tenure". Average monthly private rent payments were found to be almost double those in the social sector, and 39% more than average mortgage payments.

The reforms outlined by the government last week will ban so-called no-fault evictions, but also strengthen landlords' rights to throw tenants out for antisocial behaviour.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities said at the time that 11 million tenants across England would "benefit from safer, fairer and higher quality homes".

Ryanair back to near-record profit for 2022 as passenger numbers soar

Mark Sweney



▲ *Ryanair said it expected to carry 186 million passengers this year with a target of 300 million by 2034*
PHOTOGRAPH: ADAM BERRY/GETTY IMAGES

Ryanair has bounced back to a near-record €1.4bn (£1.2bn) profit last year and expects to better that in 2023, fuelled by a summer boom in which the low-cost airline will carry a record number of passengers.

Europe's largest airline swung back to profit in the year to the end of March after reporting a €355m loss in the previous year. The company, led by Michael O'Leary, said it was cautiously optimistic that it would increase profits again this year, which could result in it topping the record €1.45bn it made in 2018.

Ryanair said it expected to carry 186 million passengers this year, backed by its summer schedule covering almost 2,500 routes and 3,000 daily flights, with an ambition to fly 300 million people a year by 2034.

The British Airways owner, IAG, recently upgraded its profit expectations thanks to strong demand for holiday travel despite the cost of living squeeze.

"To date, summer 2023 demand is robust and peak summer 2023 fares are trending ahead of last year," O'Leary, the chief executive, said. "First-quarter fares, which benefited from a strong Easter in April, will be significantly higher than the first quarter of 2022-23."

The airline, which this month spent $40bn (£32bn) on 300 new aircraft from Boeing in a bet it can continue to outperform European rivals, carried a record 168 million passengers last year.

> **€1.4bn**
> *Ryanair's profits for the year to the end of March, after it reported a loss of €355m the previous year*

Neil Sorahan, the Ryanair chief financial officer, said that while he did not expect the European aviation industry to fully recover this year, as it was running at 90% to 95% pre-Covid capacity levels, Ryanair was operating at 125% of pre-pandemic levels and growing. "We don't have a lot of visibility into the second half of this year, as we normally would, but the first quarter and Easter has been strong and fares into the second quarter are trending well. We are hopeful," he said.

Soaring costs and increased capacity will add €1bn to Ryanair's fuel costs this year – which Sorahan said equated to about €5 a passenger – but the company said it was "cautiously optimistic" that revenue would grow enough this year to cover that and increase profits.

Government's NatWest stake falls below 40% after share sale worth £1.26bn

Mark Sweney
Kalyeena Makortoff

The UK government has sold a £1.26bn stake in NatWest, taking the state's shareholding below 40% for the first time since the bank's emergency bailout in 2008.

It is the sixth block sale of NatWest shares since the financial crisis, and brings the government one step closer to returning the bank to full private ownership.

The government has set a self-imposed deadline of 2026 to fully privatise the bank, roughly 18 years after taxpayers spent £46bn to save NatWest Group, then known as Royal Bank of Scotland Group, from collapse. The bailout resulted in the government taking an 84% stake. The latest block sale has reduced its shareholding from 41.4% to 38.6%.

"This transaction reduces government ownership below 40% and demonstrates positive progress on the bank's strategic priorities and the path to privatisation," said NatWest Group's chief executive, Alison Rose.

The current timeframe for the sell-off is twice as long as it took for the government to offload its holding in Lloyds Banking Group, which bought HBOS in a government-orchestrated rescue plan at the height of the financial crisis and was handed a £20.3bn bailout in return. Lloyds bought back the last of its shares from the government in 2017.

The main reason for the delay is that the government is trying to avoid losing taxpayer money in the process of disposing of its NatWest stake. The Treasury said last Tuesday that meeting its 2025-26 deadline would depend on how financial markets were faring, and whether it could assure "value for money for taxpayers".

Over the past decade, shares in NatWest Group, which has a market value of about £25bn, have tended to trade at barely half the average price of the bailout. The government said yesterday that it had agreed to sell 469m shares at a price of 268.4p each. That is nearly half the 500p it paid for the shares in 2008.

Last month, the government extended by a further two years a separate plan to sell a 15% stake in NatWest by drip feeding shares back into the market.

It came after weeks of banking turmoil in March that led to the collapse of Credit Suisse and a handful of mid-sized banks in the US. Shares of UK banks were hit, amid fears over a fresh financial crisis.

Business view
Nils Pratley



English water firms 'want to be held to account' – just not for their past sewage spills

'We want to be held to account …," said Ruth Kelly, the new public face of the English water companies, last week, briefly raising hopes of a reckoning for the industry's past (and current) sewage spills. Then the chair of Water UK clarified what her version of accountability covered. The companies wish to be held to account "… for putting it right".

The past 30 years, we were invited to think, should be considered an unfortunate chapter in which the industry didn't give sewage spills enough attention while other investments were prioritised. That was the gist of her apology. "By and large, the water companies were carrying out their legal responsibilities but … what's legal is not necessarily the right answer or what people expect," she argued on BBC Radio 4's Today programme.

One trusts this "by and large" claim provoked spluttering among officials at the Environment Agency and Ofwat. As Kelly must know, both regulatory bodies have been engaged for the past 18 months in an inquiry to determine whether the industry was, in essence, not treating as much sewage as it should been at 2,000-plus treatment plants. Whether legal duties were met is very much a live question. Ofwat and the EA are understandably tight-lipped on details until any enforcement action is decided. But as David Black, Ofwat's chief executive, said in June when South West Water was added to the list of companies under specific investigation, "from what we have seen so far, the scale of the issue here is shocking".

On the rest of the list are Anglian, Northumbrian, Thames, Wessex and Yorkshire Water - six of the nine big firms. Should Thames, the biggest, be found guilty, that could mean a fine of £218m based on last year's £2.2bn turnover.

Jonson Cox, who retired as chair of Ofwat last summer, gave evidence to a House of Lords committee in September. Concern around the operation of wastewater treatment works dated back to 2015, he said, but came to a head in October 2021 when data from a rollout of new monitors started to arrive.

"We were absolutely dismayed by that information," he told the Lords, and suggested companies probably knew about non-compliance with permits before 2021. "Did companies not know anything about this? I do not find that credible," he said. "I find it interesting that as the rollout reached a critical scale the data was put on the table."

This investigation goes to the heart of incentives in the industry: whether it's just been easier (and lucrative) to allow sewage to spill into rivers than to do the difficult and expensive job of treating it.

As they contemplate Kelly's offer to have £10bn added to their bills, customers might digest three of Cox's other points.

First, the problem with storm overflows "is not just 'investment', as is so often cited by companies". Nearly a third of breaches result from inadequate maintenance of sewers - maintenance that the companies must certify to Ofwat every year that they can sustain to legal standards. "If they don't believe they have the resources to do their job, they should have appealed," Cox said.



▲ *A warning on a poster from the Dirty Water Campaign, which has put up flyers along the River Thames*

Second, "it is for companies and their shareholders to fund and put the problem right". The elements that get factored into bills are where new standards are required.

Third, since the value of firms' assets is indexed to inflation, a form of windfall gain is being enjoyed. "It would seem not unreasonable," argued Cox, to expect firms to share this gain and absorb some financial pain.

That is the context in which to view Kelly's pitch for £10bn-worth of customer-funded investment. There is no reason for Ofwat to accept it until investments that should have happened have been 100% recovered from corporate pockets. A couple of the more far-sighted chief executives in the sector, it should be said, accept as much; they predict fresh equity injections by shareholders at some firms to get the plan rolling.

Yet the official Kelly and Water UK narrative contained no hint of financial compromise or mention of the inquiry: it read as an attempt to draw a line under the past. That won't wash. Accountability must also be retrospective.

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Beijing bans US semiconductor company from key infrastructure

Dan Milmo
Graeme Wearden

The Chinese government has told operators of important infrastructure in the country to stop buying products from the US chipmaker Micron Technology.

Its products carried "serious network security risks" that posed hazards to the country's information infrastructure and affected national security, the cyberspace administration of China said in a statement on Sunday.

The move is the latest example of tensions between the US and China over technology, after a US ban on using the social video app TikTok on government phones and restrictions imposed by Washington on the export of some sophisticated computer chips to China.

"Operators of critical information infrastructure in China should stop purchasing products from Micron," the Chinese agency said.

A US Department of Commerce spokesperson said the move had "no basis in fact".

The China and Hong Kong market accounts for about 15% of Micron's revenues, and the company's shares fell 3.7% in early trading in New York.

The Micron announcement came as Joe Biden told the final day of the G7 summit in Japan that he expected relations with China to improve "very shortly". The US president said on Sunday that a spat over a "silly balloon" had destabilised the relationship, referring to the shooting down of a Chinese spy balloon off the US east coast in February.

China had announced an official review of Micron under its information security laws on 4 April, hours after Japan had joined Washington in imposing restrictions on Chinese access to technology used to make processor chips on security grounds.

In Sunday's statement the agency said: "China firmly promotes high-level opening up to the outside world and as long as it complies with Chinese laws and regulations, welcomes enterprises and various platform products and services from various countries to enter the Chinese market."



▲ *China and Hong Kong account for about 15% of Micron's revenues*

> ***'China promotes opening up ... as long as it complies with Chinese laws'***
>
> **Statement by China's cyberspace agency**

The decision could affect Micron products in sectors from telecoms to transport and finance, according to China's broad definition of critical information infrastructure. A Micron executive said the financial cost would run into a single-digit percentage of the company's revenues.

The chipmaker, which is headquartered in Boise, Idaho, makes products including DRAM chips, flash memory and solid-state hard drives through its Crucial, Ballistix and SpecTek brands.

It generated $5.2bn (£4.2bn) of revenue from China, including $1.7bn from Hong Kong, last year, about 16% of its total revenue, according to analysts at the US investment bank Jefferies.

Beijing is pouring billions of dollars into trying to accelerate chip development and reduce the need for foreign technology. Its semiconductor manufacturers can supply chips used in autos and home appliances but not those that support smartphones, artificial intelligence and other advanced applications.

Washington

Taiwan fears fuel effort to stifle China's chip industry

Amy Hawkins
Senior China correspondent

Signs of the burgeoning conflict between the US and China can be spotted in many different places, from balloons in the sky to videos on TikTok. But nowhere is it more apparent than on microscopic wafers of silicon, otherwise known as semiconductors.

Semiconductors, or microchips, are tiny pieces of technology that power everything from microwave ovens to military weapons. The industry is worth more than $580bn (£466bn), but even that figure belies their importance to the global economy. Their existence powers several trillion dollars' worth of goods and processes; without them the global economy would shudder to a halt.

It's therefore a source of concern to many that more than 90% of the world's semiconductors are made in the place many US officials think could be the site of the next global conflict: Taiwan.

If China were to annex Taiwan - which US officials believe could be attempted in the next decade - it, like the rest of the world, would find its supply of semiconductors massively disrupted.

Beijing wants to boost its advanced semiconductor capacity so as to be more economically resilient in the event of an invasion, but also as a means of developing its military to be prepared for such a conflict. The US, however, is using the tools of international trade to undermine these efforts.

China's semiconductor industry grew from about 1,300 registered companies in 2011 to 22,800 by 2020, but this has primarily been in manufacturers that make bigger and less technologically advanced chips. The most up-to-date chips measure at 5 nanometres or smaller; China's industry is mostly dominated by chips that are 24 nanometres or more.



◀ *A clean room at a chip research lab in Taiwan. The island produces 90% of the world's semiconductors*
PHOTOGRAPH: ANNABELLE CHIH/GETTY IMAGES

> **22,800**
> *Estimated number of chipmakers in China's semiconductor industry in 2020, up from about 1,300 in 2011*

> **6,000**
> *Number of chipmaker licences revoked by China in a 2022 fraud crackdown, up nearly 70% on 2021*

Last year, Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corporation (SMIC), China's biggest chipmaker, was reported to have made a 7-nanometre chip, which would represent a two-generation jump in terms of technological progress, but analysts doubt SMIC would be able to produce these chips at scale. Estimates suggest China is a long way off its goal of being 70% self-sufficient in semiconductors by 2025.

The US wants to stop this happening. Last year the Biden administration imposed a sweeping set of restrictions, including a measure to cut China off from chips made with US technology anywhere in the world. In March, the Netherlands confirmed it had joined an agreement with the US and Japan to restrict the export of advanced chipmaking technology.

The strategy seems to be working. In the first three months of 2023, China's chip imports declined by 23% compared with the same period in the previous year.

Beijing is thought to be preparing a 1tn yuan (£115bn) support package for the semiconductor industry, which will include tax breaks or subsidies. "Faced with the new US export controls, China's higher authorities have become more aware of the need to support firms in certain niches that are critical supply-chain vulnerabilities," says the technology analyst John Lee.

That could also mean penalising US competitors. On Sunday, China's cybersecurity watchdog said the US company Micron, one of the world's major chip manufacturers, had failed a national security review. "Operators of critical information infrastructure in China should stop purchasing Micron products," the watchdog said.

China's broad definition of critical information infrastructure includes sectors ranging from transport to healthcare. When asked if the company would appeal the decision, a spokeswoman for Micron said: "We look forward to continuing to engage in discussions with Chinese authorities."

China's leaders are also reforming the country's technology strategy, following a shakeup that will give the Communist party more direct control over science and technology policy.

But analysts think cash alone will not be enough to turbo-charge China's industry. Its leading chipmakers are still decades behind the Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company, its golden goose, and other rivals in the west, such as the Dutch company ASML.

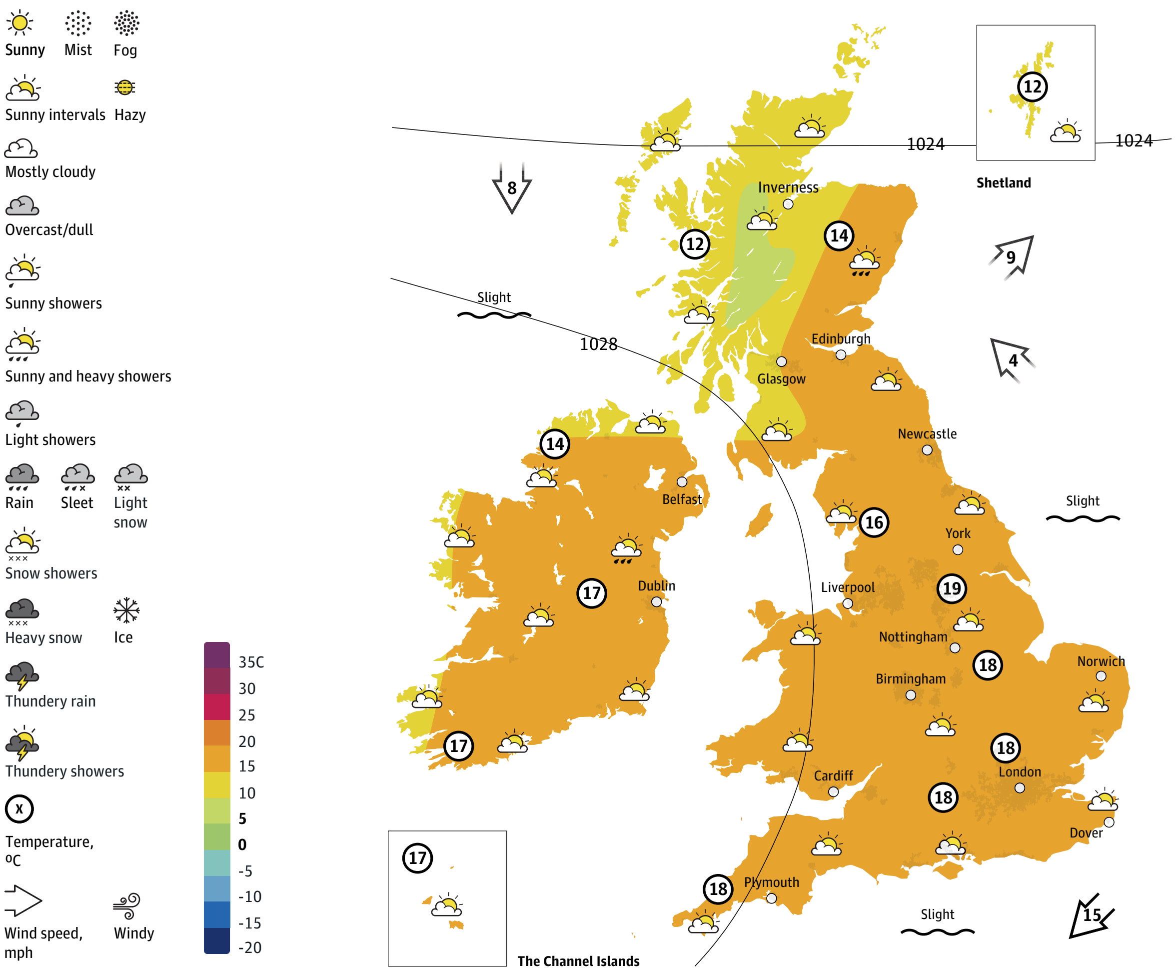
As a proportion of overall sales, the Chinese semiconductor industry spends a far lower share on research and development than its US counterpart: 7.6% compared with 18% in the US, according to the Semiconductor Industry Association, a US lobby group.

The industry has also been plagued by entrepreneurs founding fraudulent operations in order to access government subsidies. In a crackdown last year the government revoked the licences of nearly 6,000 chip businesses, a rise of almost 70% on the 2021 figure.

China's technical challenges "require not just inventing the necessary equipment, chemicals and other inputs but also learning to use them efficiently and reliably at scale," Lee says. "Years of R&D and industry experience are probably still necessary" for Chinese companies to be able to scale production.

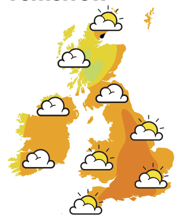
Weather
Tuesday 23 May 2023

UK and Ireland Noon today

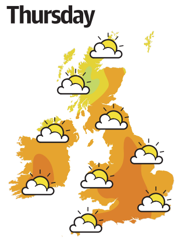


Forecast

Low 8 High 18
Tomorrow



Low 10 High 20
Thursday



Carbon count

Daily atmospheric CO_2 readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):

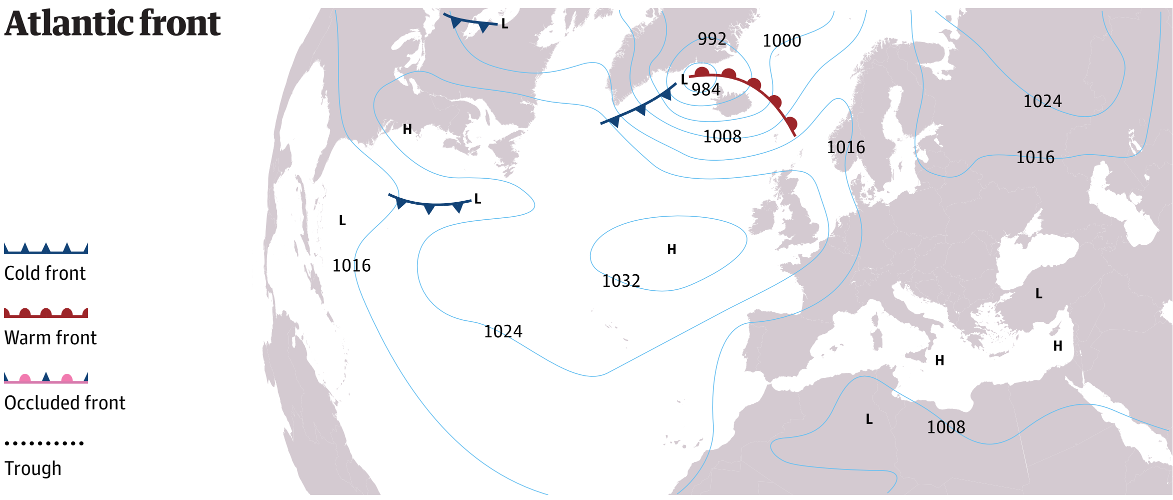
Latest	
21 May 2023	423.75
Weekly average	
14 May 2023	423.50
22 May 2022	421.20
22 May 2013	400.14
Pre-industrial base	*280*
Safe level	*350*

Source: NOAA-ESRL

Around the UK

	Lows and highs	Precipitation	Air pollution
London	9 – 18	10%	Low
Manchester	8 – 17	40%	Low
Edinburgh	8 – 16	25%	Low
Belfast	7 – 16	25%	Low
Birmingham	9 – 18	25%	Low
Brighton	9 – 17	5%	Low
Bristol	9 – 18	10%	Low
Cardiff	9 – 18	15%	Low
Newcastle	8 – 18	40%	Low
Penzance	11 – 16	5%	Low

Atlantic front

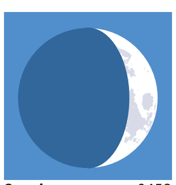


High tides

Source: © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Times are local UK times

Aberdeen	**0413**	3.9m	**1648**	3.7m
Avonmouth	**1015**	11.7m	**2224**	11.7m
Barrow	**0211**	8.6m	**1438**	8.4m
Belfast	**0205**	3.5m	**1429**	3.1m
Cobh	**0827**	3.7m	**2045**	3.7m
Cromer	**0924**	4.7m	**2204**	4.4m
Dover	**0202**	6.3m	**1423**	6.3m
Dublin	**0224**	3.8m	**1457**	3.6m
Galway	**0822**	4.5m	**2032**	4.6m
Greenock	**0310**	3.5m	**1548**	3.1m
Harwich	**0235**	3.8m	**1448**	3.7m
Holyhead	**0108**	5.2m	**1334**	4.9m
Hull	**0910**	6.8m	**2142**	6.5m
Leith	**0538**	5.1m	**1806**	5.0m
Liverpool	**0151**	8.7m	**1415**	8.4m
London Bridge	**0445**	7.0m	**1659**	6.5m
Lossiemouth	**0241**	3.7m	**1514**	3.5m
Milford Haven	**0916**	6.2m	**2129**	6.2m
Newquay	**0808**	6.1m	**2021**	6.2m
North Shields	**0621**	4.7m	**1853**	4.5m
Oban	**0839**	3.4m	**2047**	3.6m
Penzance	**0741**	4.9m	**1959**	5.0m
Plymouth	**0840**	4.9m	**2047**	5.1m
Portsmouth	**0217**	4.4m	**1453**	4.4m
Southport	**0125**	8.4m	**1342**	8.1m
Stornoway	**1002**	4.0m	**2204**	4.2m
Weymouth	**0854**	0.9m	**2104**	1.0m
Whitby	**0655**	5.1m	**1925**	4.9m
Wick	**0207**	3.2m	**1437**	3.0m
Workington	**0217**	7.8m	**1443**	7.4m

Sun & Moon



Sun rises	0458
Sun sets	2056
Moon rises	0716
Moon sets	0031
First Quarter	27 May

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather** ©2023

Lighting up

Belfast	2137 to 0505
Birm'ham	2108 to 0459
Brighton	2054 to 0500
Bristol	2107 to 0508
Carlisle	2125 to 0450
Cork	2132 to 0529
Dublin	2131 to 0512
Glasgow	2137 to 0451
Harlech	2119 to 0506
Inverness	2146 to 0439
London	2056 to 0456
M'chester	2114 to 0457
Newcastle	2121 to 0445
Norwich	2057 to 0446
Penzance	2112 to 0525

Weather tracker

Over the weekend, a rapidly intensifying region of thunderstorms in the western Pacific culminated in the formation of Typhoon Mawar.

The movement of this storm is projected to affect the Mariana Islands, including the US territory of Guam, as early as today. There is a risk of wind speeds above 75mph, with torrential rain.

Beyond this, there is forecast model divergence but with sufficient risk that Mawar will continue to strengthen as it enters the Philippine Sea over this weekend and early next week. The potential for disruptive wind and rain will therefore exist for parts of the Philippines and perhaps towards Taiwan.

In large tracts of central and northern Europe, May has been a fairly cool month with temperatures running below the seasonal norm. Over the past few days, warmth has started to build, particularly across parts of Germany and into the Alps.

Later this week and through the weekend, it looks likely that more significant heat will build through Spain and Portugal, eventually extending northwards through France.

Brendan Jones *MetDesk*

Around the world

Algiers	21	Lisbon	25
Ams'dam	15	Madrid	22
Athens	24	Malaga	21
Auckland	17	Melb'rne	17
B Aires	21	Mexico C	26
Bangkok	36	Miami	31
Barcelona	21	Milan	29
Basra	43	Mombasa	30
Beijing	31	Moscow	21
Berlin	20	Mumbai	33
Bermuda	23	N Orleans	31
Brussels	17	Nairobi	25
Budapest	26	New Delhi	40
C'hagen	15	New York	21
Cairo	35	Oslo	17
Cape Town	18	Paris	19
Chicago	29	Perth	22
Corfu	25	Prague	20
Dakar	27	Reykjavik	8
Dhaka	33	Rio de J	25
Dublin	17	Rome	23
Florence	28	Shanghai	25
Gibraltar	21	Singapore	31
H Kong	27	Stockh'm	21
Harare	25	Strasb'g	22
Helsinki	20	Sydney	20
Istanbul	20	Tel Aviv	28
Jo'burg	16	Tenerife	25
K Lumpur	31	Tokyo	16
K'mandu	26	Toronto	22
Kabul	24	Vancouv'r	15
Kingston	31	Vienna	24
Kolkata	36	Warsaw	23
L Angeles	22	Wash'ton	24
Lagos	30	Well'ton	16
Lima	24	Zurich	20

Racing

Jockey Club seeks injunction against Derby protests

Page 35 →

Golf

Week that changed everything for Michael Block

Page 35 →



Sport



▲ *Manchester City fans celebrate at the Etihad Stadium on Sunday, a day after the club secured the Premier League title*
TOM JENKINS/THE GUARDIAN

Murky waters

Perhaps one day this whole age of football will require an asterisk

Jonathan Liew



In 2008 Speedo introduced the LZR Racer, a body-length swimsuit lined with stiff polyurethane plastic panels that dramatically reduced drag in the water. Essentially it turned the swimmer into a smooth aerodynamic tube, trapping little pockets of air to improve buoyancy. The technology was introduced in time for the Beijing Olympics, where 23 world records were set by swimmers wearing the LZR.

The impact on the sport was cataclysmic. Athletes who enjoyed the benefits of the new "super suit" described the sensation as like flying. Those who had signed deals with other manufacturers were faced with the choice of breaking their contracts or seeing their careers ruined. And, of course, the records continued to tumble. After Michael Phelps – wearing the LZR – was beaten at the 2009 world championships by the unknown Paul Biederman, wearing a successor suit made entirely of polyurethane – his coach Bob Bowman threatened to pull him out of swimming entirely. In the space of 17 months in 2008 and 2009, a total of 140 world records were set using the LZR. Fifteen still stand. As Bowman put it at the time: "We've lost all the history of the sport."

For some within swimming, the super-suit era remains something of a taboo these days, an embarrassing family secret, a period in the sport's history that many would prefer to be consigned to oblivion. Yet some also idly wonder what swimming might have looked like had Fina (now World Aquatics) not chosen to ban plastic-based swimsuits, as it did in 2010. What might have happened if an entire sport had basically chosen to legitimise the pursuit of a grotesque advantage through whatever means possible? Perhaps, on reflection, it might have ended up looking a lot like football.

"Lance Armstrong" started trending on Twitter for a while on Thursday morning, in the aftermath of Manchester City's stunning Champions League triumph against Real Madrid. Which, while funny, doesn't really work as a comparison for a number of reasons. Not the least of which is that City are yet to be found guilty of the 115 Premier League rule breaches of which they are accused, a process that should finally reach its conclusion some time towards the end of the Anthropocene, once City have finally run out of objections over the composition of the hearing panel, the temperature and furniture arrangement of the adjudication room, the colour of the flowers, and so on.

But even then the Armstrong parallel feels wilfully obtuse. Pumping your body full of EPO and human growth hormone in a sport where the correlation between power output and success is almost a straight line is not really the same thing as false accounting in a complex ball sport. By the same token, everyone agrees that doping should be banned. Not everyone agrees that football club owners should be restricted in the amount they are allowed to spend. The more compelling analogy, for me, is with swimming's super-suit era: a period of high drama but also high farce, and crucially defined not by a single high-profile case but a whole culture of lawless free-for-all, much of it residing in the endless grey area between what is legal and what is not.

Because this is the slightly inconvenient part for those seeking to make a grisly exemplar of City: this is a sport where everyone is essentially trying to cheat all the time. Deceit and duplicity and bad intentions are built into virtually every facet of football. There's the small stuff, like diving and time-wasting and trying to claim a corner you know you didn't win. There's the medium-sized stuff, like tapping-up, or trying to get referees changed. And then there is the elite-tier cheating where you try to pervert the very fundamentals of the game itself, either by distorting the competitive ecosystem through obscene wealth or rounding up your mates and deciding to start a fancy new Super League. It's a sliding scale, to be sure. But to a greater or lesser extent, everyone is engaged in it.

> *Deceit and duplicity and bad intentions are built into virtually every facet of football*

The important point is that the physical existence of actual rules is to a large extent irrelevant. Football's regulatory framework has never been remotely fit for purpose, which is one of the reasons a strong independent regulator is so urgently required. The key issue here is one of trust: the extent to which we as fans can trust what we're watching. Barcelona and Real Madrid during the Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo eras were funded by hundreds of millions in illegal state subsidies, mainly tax breaks and soft loans. The money that bankrolled Juventus's era of dominance was seemingly conjured out of thin air, based on false player values. The regimes that fund City, Newcastle, Paris Saint-Germain and perhaps Manchester United next are autocracies who believe less in the rule of law than the rule of getting whatever they want.

Perhaps one day, like the super-suit world records, this whole age of football will require an asterisk. This title was won by manipulating referees. This Champions League was won by spending money you said didn't exist. This Ballon d'Or belongs to a player whose club shouldn't have been able to afford him. Perhaps one day we will look back on the reckless carbon era of football with a certain sense of shame, a weird experiment never to be repeated. For now, we continue to glide bewitchingly through our frictionless, padded, polyurethane-enhanced present.

'It's a whole different sport when you become the hunted'

After 231 days in jail Boris Becker is back behind the mic at the French Open. He discusses watching Djokovic win Wimbledon from prison and his fears for Raducanu



Sean Ingle



'The thing with advice is that, in hindsight, you're always smarter," says Boris Becker on a blue-eyed Paris morning as he contemplates what words of wisdom he would give his 17-year-old self, given all that has happened since. He pauses. Mulls it over. And ultimately decides: not a lot, actually.

"If I had asked anybody in 1985, 'Can I win Wimbledon?' the advice would have been no," he says. "And I think 99% of people would have said it's impossible to defend it when I was 18. But I did it. So good advice is a double-edged sword."

Becker is in full flow now, fascinating and defiant. "I have children. And you give them the best advice you can. But they have to find out what's wrong, what's true and what's not, what's possible and what's impossible."

In some ways, you get Becker's point. Why risk blunting those irrepressible animal spirits that took him to six grand slam titles, an Olympic doubles gold medal and so much more? Then again, they also sent him tumbling down a path of lurid tabloid headlines, financial peril and 231 days in jail after a court ruled he had acted "deliberately and dishonestly" by hiding hundreds of thousands of pounds of assets after he was declared bankrupt.

Becker makes it clear early on that he doesn't want to march back over that particular patch of old ground. Even a vague question about whether he is in a good place now is met with an impeccably polite putting down of the shutters as he doesn't want to talk about his private life. Once we move on to next week's French Open, and his return to the commentary box, he opens up his shoulders and starts swinging.

He is particularly compelling when it comes to Emma Raducanu's recent woes and his fears for her future. Like the 20-year-old Briton, Becker won grand slam titles as a teenager only to develop wrist injuries. While wishing Raducanu a speedy recovery, he admits he is concerned. "The surgeries that she has had are, in my opinion, career-threatening," Becker says. "Having surgery on your playing wrist, and as a two-handed player, the other wrist – and then on your ankle – is tough to bear for a young woman."

Becker clearly admires Raducanu but knows from first-hand experience how hard it is to have a permanent target etched on your back. "Tennis is a completely different game when you go into court and you have nothing to lose," he says. "Anybody can play then. It's a whole different sport when you become the hunted."

Has making changes to her team since winning the US Open in 2021 been another factor in Raducanu's struggles? Becker hesitates. "I'm not in her inner circle so I don't know all the things that went off, although I've seen the coaching changes. But as a young woman, all of a sudden being on top of the mountain, you have to really dig in and find the resources and the team around you to guide you through the next 10 years.

"Its about mindset and talent, team, approach and circumstances. She's not the first one who wasn't able to do it. And she won't be the last. But if she was good enough to win a grand slam [title] once, she's good enough to win one again."

For much of his career, Becker was guided by Ion Tiriac, a stern Romanian who was known as the Brasov Bulldozer. Would someone similar help? "Ion was an extremely important mentor because he'd been there before," he says. "And yeah, there are a couple of people – but not many – who could help her. But, first of all, she has to be ready for it. Her parents have to be ready for it. And if that's not the case, then nobody can help."



Becker feels the surgeries Raducanu has had are 'career-threatening'

Becker was still in prison during the French Open last year and he expects Roland Garros to have a very different vibe on his return now Roger Federer and Serena Williams have retired, Rafael Nadal is injured, and Novak Djokovic is struggling with form.

Does he sense a changing of the guard? "It's already happened," he says. "Carlos Alcaraz became world No 1 after winning the US Open last year – that's your evidence. There are plenty of other young players knocking on the door, including Jannik Sinner and Holgar Rune. Then we have to mention the Russians – we don't like to do so but we have to as they're good enough."

Becker believes it would be foolish to write off Djokovic, who he coached for three years from 2013, despite his recent performances. "Clay is not his best surface, but in the last couple of years he was able to pull it back together at the French. As long as he's healthy, and as long as he wants to play, he is always going to be one of the favourites to win a grand slam."

Becker also feels Djokovic doesn't always get the love or appreciation he deserves as a player or person. "He's actually a very outgoing, very worldly man. Sometimes he comes across as a bit of a tennis machine. But when he's not in his office, he is very charming. You can talk to him about business, politics, about music, and he's a good guy.

"He's also a real tennis historian. He understands who was there beforehand and he wants to make a mark. Which he has done. Then he's a perfectionist, like all superstars. He wants to play the perfect match, which in his case probably happened once or twice."

During last year's Wimbledon final he was in prison, sharing the same cloying space as murderers, child molesters, drug dealers and rapists. There were also two death threats made against him, with Becker telling German TV last December that one was particularly scary. "I thought I would lose my life in Wandsworth. Someone, a murderer I later found out, wanted my coat and he wanted money and he said he would kill me if he didn't get it."

While Becker does not want to go into details about his time inside, he does reveal he was allowed to watch Djokovic lift his seventh Wimbledon title. "I was very emotional when he won. It was a great statement and he's a friend so I was happy to see him win. On the other side, I like Nick Kyrgios and what he brings to the competition. So I want him back healthy and I want him back in with the same attitude that he had last year. Because it's great for tennis."

The question of when Becker will grace the All-England Club again is also uncertain, with reports suggesting he could be banned from re-entering Britain for 10 years. He doesn't want to say how long it may be, but the thought of a prolonged absence clearly hurts.

"Wimbledon is my favourite tournament. I have won it a number of times. I've commentated on the final 20 times. I used to live in Wimbledon. So the club is very, very close to my heart and I'll be watching it from afar."

Becker also believes his life experiences will help his charity work and is a keen supporter of Laureus Sport for Good, which works to improve the lives of kids from underprivileged communities. "We've reached over six million children in over 140 countries. We use sport as a platform to spread the word to do the right thing."

He is loosening up now, so it feels appropriate to ask why he believes he remains popular in Britain despite his mistakes. "Well, I lived in the country for a long time and so I was able to show my human side: my personality, my character. Apparently, we have a similar sense of humour, which is unusual for a German. You have a very dark sense of humour. So I get their jokes and they get my jokes. That's not necessarily the case in Germany but it is in the UK.

"It's a wonderful country. And London is just one of the most amazing cities in the world."

▼ *A publicity image from the documentary Boom! Boom! The World vs Boris Becker*
PROD DB/ALAMY



'Wimbledon is very, very close to my heart and I'll be watching it from afar'

Our time is nearly up and with Becker radiating health and happiness it feels worth chancing a more direct question on his time in prison. Becker listens, then starts to smile. "I know as a professional journalist you have to ask. I respect it. And I'm living a good life again."

As we shake hands, Becker whispers something else, which I later pick up on tape. "Say hello to Wimbledon for me," he says. One day, he hopes they will be able to reply in person.

Boris Becker is a Laureus Academy Member and works on their Sport for Good projects.

Golf

Unknown club pro writes golf's own Roy of the Rovers story

A hole-in-one and top 20 finish catapult the unheralded Michael Block on to the global stage

Ewan Murray
Oak Hill

The record books will show Michael Block received $288,333 for his exploits at the 105th US PGA Championship. In reality, the impact of Oak Hill on this 46-year-old club professional from California promises to be life-changing. Brooks Koepka lifted the Wanamaker Trophy but Block stole hearts and minds. Heroes can wear slacks and a polo shirt.

By yesterday morning Block was booked to appear on US chat shows, had leapt around 3,000 places on the world rankings and received invitations to two PGA Tour competitions. He will tee up this week at the Charles Schwab Classic rather than give lessons and fold polo shirts at the Arroyo Trabuco Golf Club. Block's tie for 15th was the best by a club professional in the US PGA since 1986. "Mind-boggling," was his own description of what transpired in Rochester.

At the start of tournament week, Block visited a pub close to Oak Hill without a soul recognising him. By the time the final leaderboard was posted he had finished above Jon Rahm, Jordan Spieth, Collin Morikawa, Xander Schauffele, Dustin Johnson, Justin Thomas and Patrick Reed. The highest round of Block's tournament was 71.

This was about far more than simply performance, though. During the final round, spent in the company of Rory McIlroy, Oak Hill reverberated to chants about the "Block party". This hitherto unknown golfer had achieved cult status, boosted by delivery of the major's only hole-in-one, at the 15th and with McIlroy among the delighted onlookers. "The atmosphere playing with Michael was unbelievable," McIlroy said. Golf has its Roy of the Rovers story. Those who sneer at the PGA of America opening up its major to club players have been given food for thought.

"The week has been a dream," Block said. "I didn't know it was going to happen but I knew if I just played my darned game, that I could do this. I always knew it.

"Obviously I love my family and my job and everything, but golf is my life. I live it, breathe it. I made sure of one thing in my life, that I was going to drive to a golf course every day, whether it was as a caddie or as an on-site service kid or an assistant pro or a head pro or general manager, I was going to be at a golf course. I came to the golf course at Oak Hill and played in the PGA Championship."

It is difficult to quantify what all of this means for Block, but he will be handsomely rewarded. New clothing, sponsorship and equipment deals are surely inevitable. Block is already exempt for next year's US PGA Championship at Valhalla. The PGA Tour has latched onto his new-found celebrity status, issuing him with invites, including for the Canadian Open. One good week on the PGA Tour would open up all sorts of playing opportunities at golf's elite level.

"I'm just a club professional, right?" Block said. "I work, I have fun. I have a couple of boys that I love to play golf with. I have a great wife, I have great friends. I live the normal life. I love being at home. I love sitting in my backyard. My best friend in the world is my dog. I can't wait to see him. I miss him so much it's ridiculous, my little black lab.

"It's been a surreal experience and I have this weird kind of sensation that life is going to be not quite the same moving forward, but only in a good way, which is cool."

Block does slightly underplay his level of competitive focus. After all, he has played in umpteen PGA Tour events, via success on minor tours. But the point is he has never made meaningful impact. He shot 76, 81 at last year's Farmers Insurance Open. At the 2018 US Open, Block could fare no better than 85, 78. Oak Hill provided a huge breakthrough, in terms of psychology and profile.

"I want to get more phone calls," Block said. "I want to get more exemptions. I want people to start calling me and saying: 'We want you in our event because it makes it better.'" Block's willingness to embrace fame is intriguing in itself; others in his position would offer lame sentiment about focussing on their next shot.

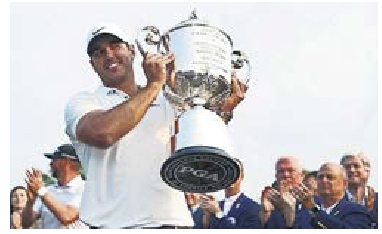
Block admitted to shedding tears yesterday as the enormity of major week in upstate New York hit home. Memories to last a lifetime have been created. "I didn't cry when my kids were born," he said. "If it makes any sense, the one thing in the world that makes me cry is golf, if that puts into context how much I love the game."

An hour under Block's instruction would cost $150. It appears that will not change. "I'm good with $150 no matter what," he insisted. "I would feel bad about charging more for a golf lesson." He may, however, have a little less time to give them.



◀ *Rory McIlroy congratulates Michael Block on his hole-in-one at the 15th hole at Oak Hill on Sunday*
DAVID CANNON/GETTY IMAGES

Koepka can be major force



Pete Cowen, the English coach of Brooks Koepka, believes the new US PGA champion can match the major-winning tallies of legends such as Ben Hogan and Gary Player, who both won nine. Koepka (📷) now has five majors to his name. "He will win a lot more," he said. "I certainly think he will go another four and he would obviously like a grand slam. I thought he was an unbelievable player in 2018-2019 and he has got stronger." Koepka will rise to second in the automatic qualifying places for the US Ryder Cup team. While it would seem extraordinary if he did not at least receive a captain's pick for the meeting with Europe in September, Koepka's position as part of the rebel LIV tour adds an element of doubt. Ewan Murray

Racing

Jockey Club acts to stop protests at Derby meeting

Greg Wood

The Jockey Club, which operates Epsom Downs racecourse, has applied for an injunction to prevent the protest group Animal Rising engaging in "acts intended to disrupt the Derby Festival" when the track stages both the Oaks and the Derby on 2 and 3 June.

Activists from Animal Rising attempted to prevent the Grand National at Aintree going ahead last month, and the start of the race was delayed by 15 minutes. More than 100 activists were arrested before and after the race took place.

Up to 100,000 spectators are expected at Epsom next month, including tens of thousands who will watch for free from the "Hill" enclosure in the middle of the track.

The injunction would "prohibit individuals from entering on to the racetrack and carrying out other acts with the intention and/or effect of disrupting the races". If the injunction is granted at a high court hearing on Friday, individuals acting in breach "could be subject to proceedings for contempt of court, which may lead to a fine and/or imprisonment".

Nevin Truesdale, the Jockey Club chief executive, said yesterday: "We respect everyone's right to peaceful and lawful protest and have offered Animal Rising a space for this purpose directly outside the racecourse during the Derby Festival. However, Animal Rising have made it explicitly clear that they intend to breach security and access the track itself in an attempt to stop racing taking place and it is our duty and obligation to do everything we can to protect everyone's safety and prevent a repeat of the illegal and reckless protests we saw at Aintree in April."

Nathan McGovern, a spokesperson for Animal Rising, said the group would not be deterred by the threat of legal action. "It's not entirely unexpected," he said. "Injunctions are a very dark side of British legislation which allow companies to buy their own laws.

"We will not be deterred. The existence of an injunction would raise the risks for people taking action, but the issues we are talking about are far too important to let slide."



▲ *Epsom Downs racecourse will host the Oaks and the Derby on 2-3 June*

Sport
Cycling

▼ *Mark Cavendish during a stage win on the Champs Élysées in 2012*
TOM JENKINS/THE GUARDIAN



Cavendish was a sprinter whose career became a marathon

The depth and breadth of the Manxman's successes make him stand out as one of the sport's all-time greats

William Fotheringham

The words "end of an era" should not be used lightly, but when Mark Cavendish hangs up his wheels later this season the term will apply, absolutely. The Manxman's glittering career has lasted nigh on 20 years, if his first world title in 2005 is taken as a starting point. In bike racing, he is almost unique for a sprinter in terms of both longevity and the depth and breadth of his results. Generations of fastmen have come and gone as Cavendish's list of wins has lengthened over the years, and all the while, from a brash, motormouthed youth, ready for anything, "Cav" has morphed into an elder statesman, a fixture in the sport, if occasionally a slightly terse one.

The intensity of sprinters' careers, as well as the frequent crashes, mean that as a breed of cyclist they rarely last long. To take just one example, the German powerhouse Marcel Kittel managed eight years, quitting at the age of 31. Cavendish's absolute peak, the period where if he started a sprint stage of a major race it was virtually a given that he would win, lasted, arguably, from 2009 until 2012, when he became the only sprinter to win the iconic stage finish on the Champs-Élysées in four successive Tours de France, and was named by the newspaper L'Équipe as the best sprinter of all time.

Now, Cavendish does not have the legs of the period of his pomp; then he was virtually impossible to beat thanks to his ability to read a finish, to motivate his teammates with his absolute certainty that he could win, capped by his ability to produce two devastating accelerations as the finish approached. As he rides out his final months with the Kazakh Astana squad, he has yet to win a race in 2023, but the desire to win and the self-belief common to all sprinters still run deep.

When he sprang to prominence in 2004-2005, Cavendish was one of the first generation of riders to come through the newly formed British Cycling academy, under the aegis of Rod Ellingworth. The big breakthrough came with his first Grand Tour stage win in the 2008 Tour de France at Châteauroux; Cavendish had a ghost-written column in the Guardian at the time, so he made the front page with the headline, "Guardian man wins Tour de France stage; I told my manager to put €1,000 on me".

The next few years were relatively seamless, until a new generation of sprinters headed by Kittel and Peter Sagan emerged; after 2013, Cavendish's dominance ended, highlighted by his crash at the end of the first stage of the 2014 Tour de France in Harrogate. The wins kept coming but not as straightforwardly as before. It took until 2016 for him to return to his best, taking stage one of the Tour at Utah Beach in Normandy and with it the yellow jersey, completing a full house of all three leaders' jerseys in all three Grand Tours.

Three tough seasons followed, marred by crashes and illness, with his non-selection for the Dimension Data team in the 2019 Tour being a major blow. As a result, when Cavendish returned to Châteauroux 15 years on in his second spell at the Quickstep team, it was to take his 32nd Tour stage win after returning from a difficult spell marred by illness and depression. A few months earlier, few would have put money on that comeback when, as he floundered at the Bahrain team, Cavendish said he was likely to quit the sport.

That he went on to take a further two stage wins in the 2021 Tour, equalling Eddy Merckx's all-time record of 34 stage victories, will remain the most remarkable achievement of his career; had he not quit the 2008 Tour de France early in an abortive attempt to take an Olympic gold medal in Beijing, it is as certain as anything can be in sport that he would have won at least one more stage if not two.

If the stage win record is the absolute highlight, there have been many other great Cavendish moments. The last-ditch sprint to win the world road race title in Copenhagen in 2011 is an obvious one, the culmination of a two-year campaign masterminded by Ellingworth, who also placed a major role in Cavendish's only Monument win, the narrow victory in the 2009 Milan-San Remo. His silver medal in the 2016 race in Doha was different again, coming at the end of a hugely selective race in the desert crosswinds.

In Grand Tour stage win terms, the final two stages Cavendish won in the 2012 Tour will always stick in the mind, with the yellow-jerseyed Bradley Wiggins leading out the Manxman in the rainbow jersey of world champion; my personal favourites are the stage to Aubénas in the 2009 Tour, when the peloton got smaller and smaller over a tough final climb, with Cavendish hanging tough for the win, while the 2013 stage win into Saint-Amand-Montrond was a cross-wind masterpiece created by the Quickstep team.

As the Tour de France approaches, the questions will inevitably centre on whether Cavendish will ride and if so, whether he will be able to land the single stage wins that will take him beyond Merckx's tally. In one sense, that is barely relevant. For a specialist to have drawn level with an all-rounder like Merckx was truly remarkable when it happened, and it is almost certain that the record will last well beyond the moment when the tears flow down the Manxman's cheeks as he rides his last race. Cavendish is, and will remain, one of a kind, and there are few sportsmen of whom that can truly be said.

Manx Missile In numbers

161
Professional race wins, *placing him third on all-time list behind Rik Van Looy (162) and Eddy Merckx (275)*

53
Grand Tour stage wins put him again ***third in the all-time list*** *behind Mario Cipollini (57) and Merckx (64)*

34
Tour de France stage wins *which leave him equal-top with Merckx ahead of one last campaign*

Cav at the wheel Career timeline

2005 First Madison world title, partnering Rob Hayles after replacing the injured Geraint Thomas.
2006 Takes gold in scratch race at Commonwealth Games in Melbourne.
2007 Moves up to what is now the WorldTour level on the road. His 11 victories equals Alessandro Petacchi's record for a debut campaign.
2008 Second Madison world title, this time with Bradley Wiggins. Wins four stages of the Tour de France and two stages of the Giro d'Italia.
2009 Is second Briton to win a Monument with victory in Milan-Sanremo. Wins six Tour stages and wears leader's jersey for two days at Giro after taking four stages.
2010 Wins five Tour stages. Wears leader's red jersey for two stages of Vuelta a España and wins points classification after taking four stages.
2011 Becomes second British road race world champion after Tom Simpson. Wins five Tour stages along with the points classification. Wears leader's jersey at Giro and wins three stages.



2012 Wins three Tour stages, and three at Giro, wearing the leader's pink jersey for three days.
2013 Wins two Tour stage and five Giro stages, wearing the leader's pink jersey for one day. Becomes British national champion.
2015 Wins one stage of the Tour.
2016 Wins four stages of the Tour, wearing leader's yellow jersey for the first time (left) after the opening stage and completing his set of wearing the leader's jersey in all three grand tours. Becomes Madison world champion for third time, winning with Wiggins. Wins first Olympic medal with silver in the omnium.
2021 Matches Tour de France stage wins record when he collects his 34th in Carcassonne.
2022 Wins 16th Giro stage in Hungary. Claims second British road title.

Analysis
Sid Lowe



Constant racist abuse of Vinícius means the talking has to stop

On Sunday, for the first time in 1,285 games as a coach and 47 years in football, Carlo Ancelotti refused to talk about the game. He had just seen Real Madrid lose 1-0 against Valencia but, standing in the cramped, narrow tunnel that leads to the Mestalla dressing room where he said his best player sat "angry and sad", he didn't care about that and couldn't comprehend anyone else caring either.

So when the standard post-match interview began with the standard post-match question, an inquiry as to his thoughts on another defeat, he decided that, actually, no, this wasn't going to be standard any more. Instead, he shot back: "You want to talk about football?! Or shall we talk about the other thing? That's more important than a loss, don't you think?"

Maybe this time, at last, some will begin to think so. If the Madrid manager didn't feel much like talking about football, it was because Vinícius Júnior, the 22-year-old winger who is probably the most electric player in the Spanish league, a superstar for a new generation, didn't feel much like playing it any more.

Why would he, why should he, when as he arrived at Mestalla a group of fans gathered outside had chanted: "Vinícius, you're a monkey"? When from the south stand he had been told the same? When he had been told he was an idiot, an imbecile. When he had heard the "oooh, ooohs"?

He had had enough. There was a moment in the second half when cameras closed in on Vinícius's face, tears welling in his eyes. In its simplicity, its sadness, that may be the most powerful of many dreadful images from Sunday night, but the one that made the greatest impact, the one that started something, which gathered the kind of momentum that could yet mean something tangible, came when he faced down the men who abused him. There were 20 minutes left when he pointed at a Valencia fan behind the goal, saying: "You, you, yes, you", telling teammates that man there had called him "a monkey"; "he did this", Vinícius said, imitating an ape gesture, hands tucked under his armpits.

Alongside him, Lucas Vázquez confronted fans: "Shitty racists."

The referee arrived on the pitch and police arrived in the stands. Ricardo de Burgos Bengoetxea spoke to Vinícius, explaining the protocol and asking him to trust him: first an announcement is made over the loudspeaker, and then, he told Vinícius, "if it happens a second time, we leave".

Thibaut Courtois told him it had happened in the first half too and Vinícius was ready to go already. The PA announcement, warning the game could be suspended, was met with whistles.

Ancelotti, who has been through this before with Kalidou Koulibaly in Italy, spoke to the official and his player. "He didn't want to continue," he said, "but I told him it didn't seem fair that he is the one that has to stop playing because it is not his fault: I told him you're not the guilty party; you're the victim."

Ancelotti embraced Vinícius, then kissed him, supporting him in going on. Maybe they could have walked, maybe next time they will – "had he wanted to we would have gone with him," Courtois said – but this time he continued. Until the last minute of a game that overran by more than 10 minutes – when he was sent off for thrusting an arm into the face of Hugo Duro who, in the middle of a melee, had him round the neck. As he went, he gestured to the Valencia fans that they were going down.

On social media Vinícius made the point this was "not the first time, and not the second or the third either" – there have been nine formal complaints made about abuse he has suffered this season – and described racism as "normal", encouraged even.

He adopted the league's slogan to insist that this "is not football, it's La Liga". Nothing, he said, gets done, nothing happens. The competition that "once belonged to Ronaldinho, Ronaldo, Messi and Cristiano, now belongs to the racists", he said; Brazilians see Spain as a racist country that had left him defenceless. A subsequent post from his representatives likened him to George Floyd.

"If a stadium insults a player racially, the game has to stop – and I would say the same if we were winning 3-0," Ancelotti said. "Stop the game. The referee says that the fans have to be informed first and if it continues, then we stop the game. But, for me, he doesn't need to inform them. I am curious to see what happens now."

The last line was pointed, so he was asked what he thought would happen. "Nothing," he said. "Because it has happened lots of times and nothing happens."

That suspicion was only deepened when Javier Tebas, the president of the league, went on Twitter and accused Vinícius of failing to understand whose responsibility it is to deal with racism and not showing up when they arranged meetings to explain the process to him, accusing him of insulting the country and the competition and suggesting he had allowed himself to be "manipulated".

There may have been a point in there somewhere: the league and the clubs are acting with greater determination, with observers at every game. And yet the tweet was alarmingly tone deaf.

> *There was a moment in the second half when the cameras closed in on Vinícius's face, tears welling in his eyes*

"Once again, instead of criticising racists, the president of the league appears on social media to attack me," Vinícius replied. "Much as you talk and pretend not to read, the image of your league is damaged. Look at the responses to your posts and you'll be surprised. By omission, you place yourself on the same level as racists. I want action and punishments; hashtags don't move me."

He, though, was moving something. No one else: him. By confronting his abusers and those he sees as their enablers, something started.

There could be little doubt about Ancelotti's insistence "the league has a problem". That realisation may end in nothing tangible and there is impotence in lamenting another episode just to watch it happen again.

There are still too many of those that chose sides by team, although they are fewer now, at least publicly. There are still those that insist on the buts, even as Ancelotti insisted "there are no 'buts'", those that accuse Vinícius of being provocative, as if somehow that makes it OK. He is the only one who gets the abuse, some say, as if that does too, as if that limits the impact to him alone when it is the opposite. Others talk about this as just a way of putting off a brilliant player, as if that was a legitimate weapon.

But the hope, which may be hopelessly optimistic, is that it is inescapable now: they were being confronted with it. There were messages of condemnation for the competition and support for Vinícius, a media taking this on more before, a sense that it does matter, protocols and assumptions challenged.

It came not just from Spain but everywhere, a mirror held up. There were statements from the Brazilian football federation and the Brazilian president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, from other clubs and players, including Valencia's Diakhaby. Another investigation was announced. Valencia vowed to ban the fans identified for life. The Brazilian foreign minister called the Spanish ambassador. The fight is taken to them, demands made, threats hanging over them. Above all, by him.

"He's sad and he's angry, but sad most of all," said Ancelotti, but he isn't stopping. "I will go up against the racists until the very end," Vinícius Júnior said, "even if it's far from here."

And if players such as him go, who is going to want to talk about the football then?

Racism storm Page 23 →



▶ Vinícius Junior points out a Valencia fan who he said was abusing him
IVAN TERRON/AFP7/SHUTTERSTOCK

Results

Football

PREMIER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Manchester City **C**	36	28	4	4	93	31	+62	**88**
Arsenal	37	25	6	6	83	43	+40	**81**
Newcastle	37	19	13	5	67	32	+35	**70**
Manchester United	36	21	6	9	52	41	+11	**69**
Liverpool	37	19	9	9	71	43	+28	**66**
Brighton	36	18	7	11	70	50	+20	**61**
Aston Villa	37	17	7	13	49	45	+4	**58**
Tottenham	37	17	6	14	66	62	+4	**57**
Brentford	37	14	14	9	57	46	+11	**56**
Fulham	37	15	7	15	54	51	+3	**52**
Crystal Palace	37	11	11	15	39	48	-9	**44**
Chelsea	36	11	10	15	36	42	-6	**43**
Wolves	37	11	8	18	31	53	-22	**41**
West Ham	37	11	7	19	41	53	-12	**40**
Bournemouth	37	11	6	20	37	70	-33	**39**
Nottm Forest	37	9	10	18	37	67	-30	**37**
Everton	37	7	12	18	33	57	-24	**33**
Leicester	37	8	7	22	49	67	-18	**31**
Leeds	37	7	10	20	47	74	-27	**31**
Southampton **R**	37	6	6	25	32	69	-37	**24**

Newcastle (0) **0** **Leicester** (0) **0**
52,152

SERIE A
Empoli 4 Juventus 1; Roma 2 Salernitana 2

FIFA UNDER-20 WORLD CUP (Argentina)
Group E: England 1 Tunisia 0
Group F: France 1 South Korea 2

Tennis

ATP GENEVA OPEN (Switzerland)
First round: N Jarry (Chi) bt D Lajovic (Srb) 6-4 6-2; **A Mannarino** (Fr) bt F Krajinovic (Srb) 7-5 6-1; **B Zapata Mirralles** (Sp) bt V Sachki (Ukr) 6-2 6-4; **R Carballés Baena** bt D Rincón (Sp) 6-4 4-6 6-0; **Wu Y** (Chn) bt M Huesler (Swi) 6-4 4-6 7-6 (6); **M Giron** (US) bt A Bublik (Kaz) 6-0 6-4

ATP LYON OPEN (France)
First round: B Nakashima (US) bt D Schwartzman (Arg) 7-5 6-3; **M Kevmanovic** (Srb) bt O Roca Batalla (Sp) 6-1 6-3; **A Rinderknech** (Fr) bt L Harris (SA) 6-4 6-2; **A Fils** (Fr) bt Zhang Z (Chn) 6-3 6-2; **M Ymer** (Swe) bt R Gasquet (Fr) 6-3 7-5; **D Goffin** (Bel) bt A López San Martin (Sp) 6-1 6-3

WTA STRASBOURG INTERNATIONAL (France)
First round: B Pera (US) bt S Chang (US) 6-4 4-6 6-1; **C Burel** (Fr) bt S Cirstea (Rou) 7-6 (5) 7-5; **E Routliffe** (NZ) bt Hsieh S-w (Tpe) 7-6 (2) 1-6 6-1; **L Davis** (US) bt S Illiev (Fr) 7-5 6-0; **E Navarro** (US) bt T Martincova (Cz) 6-2 6-3; **V Gracheva** (Rus) bt Bai Z (Chn) 6-3 3-6 7-6 (3); **V Tomova** (Bul) bt A Cornet (Fr) 3-6 6-4 7-5; **A Friedsam** (Ger) bt Zhang S (Chn) 6-0 6-0; **K Birrell** (Aus) bt E Malygina (Est) 6-2 6-3; **A Pavlyuchenkova** (Rus) bt A Gabueva (Rus) 6-3 6-1

WTA GRAND PRIX SAR LA PRINCESSE LALLA MERYEM
First round: P Stearns (US) bt P Udvardy (Hun) 6-1 6-1; **J Riera** (Arg) bt K Mladenovic (Fr) 6-3 6-0; **J Fett** (Cro) bt S Nahimana (Bur) 6-0 6-4; **Y Putintseva** (Kaz) bt A El Aouni (Mar) 6-1 6-4; **M Trevisan** (It) bt N Párrizas Díaz 6-2 0-0 ret; **S Stephens** (US) bt V Zvonareva (Rus) 7-5 6-4

Golf

PGA CHAMPIONSHIP (Oak Hill, Rochester, New York)
Leading final scores (US unless stated): **271** B Koepka 72 66 66 67. **273** V Hovland (Nor) 68 67 70 68; S Scheffler 67 68 73 65. **277** C Davis (Aus) 71 70 71 65; B DeChambeau 66 71 70 70; K Kitayama 70 71 71 65. **278** R McIlroy (NI) 71 69 69 69; S Straka (Aut) 69 71 73 65. **279** P Cantlay 74 67 72 66; J Rose (Eng) 69 70 69 71; C Smith (Aus) 72 72 70 65. **280** C Conners (Can) 67 68 70 75; S Lowry (Irl) 73 67 71 69; V Perez (Fr) 70 72 69 69

Netball

SUPERLEAGUE
Saracens 54 Bath 57

Basketball

NBA
Playoffs; semi-final: Miami 128 Boston 102 (Miami lead best-of-seven series 3-0)

Ice hockey

IIHF WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP (Finland/Latvia)
Group A: Denmark 1 Sweden 4; Austria 3 Hungary 3 aot (Austria win 2-0 on penalties)
Group B: Canada 2 Norway 2 aot (Norway win 4-2 on penalties); Kazakhstan 4 Slovenia 3

Fixtures

Cricket
Charlotte Edwards Cup
Pool stage Sparks v Diamonds, Edgbaston (11am); Southern Vipers v South East Stars, Newbury (11am)

Greg Wood's racing tips

Wolverhampton **2.10** Cuban Grey **2.40** Apache Star **3.10** Sail on Silverbird **3.40** Written Broadcast **4.10** Hat Toss **4.40** H Key Lails **5.15** Bailar Contigo

Huntingdon **2.30** Call Me Tara **3.00** Coastal Sun **3.30** Sisterandbrother **4.00** Letsbe Avenue **4.30** Judicial Law **5.00** Homme D'Un Soir **5.30** Red Force One

Brighton **2.23** Master Sully **2.53** All Dunn **3.23** River Wharfe **3.53** D Day Odette **4.23** Bishop's Crown **4.53** Mostawaa **5.26** Compere

Hexham **5.50** Velasco **6.20** Rostello **6.50** Trevelyn's Corn **7.20** Moonlight Glory (nb) **7.50** Captain Tommy **8.20** First Revolution **8.50** Pateen

Ayr **6.00** Loch Carron **6.30** Berry Edge **7.00** Woven **7.30** One Last Hug **8.00** Manigordo (nap) **8.30** Turbo Command **9.00** Two Auld Pals

Leicester stay alive as nervy Newcastle get over the line

Newcastle	**0**
Leicester	**0**

Louise Taylor
St James' Park

Shortly before kick-off Newcastle fans unfurled an enormous banner emblazoned with the message: "Bad times don't last but legends do."

Those words were superimposed on giant images of Eddie Howe and his players in recognition of their completion of one of football's more remarkable transformations. When Howe took charge here 19 months ago, Newcastle were 19th in the Premier League; courtesy of the point collected last night they are now guaranteed a top-four finish.

No matter that a very tired looking home side rather stumbled across the line. No matter that they needed to be grateful to the otherwise unemployed Nick Pope for saving Timothy Castagne's high velocity stoppage time volley, the glittering prize of participation in next season's Champions League is theirs.

If many Tynesiders, mentally at least, appear already in the airport departure lounge, passports at the ready as, after a 20-year absence, they prepare for a series of European adventures, Leicester are contemplating the real possibility of slogging their way round England's second tier outposts.

The 2016 Premier League champions may not quite be relegated, not yet anyway, but their slender survival hopes are dependent on Everton failing to beat Bournemouth at Goodison Park on Sunday, while they also win, at home to West Ham.

At least it will make a change for Leicester not to be playing on a Monday night. This was their fourth successive such fixture and Dean Smith, the interim manager, attempted to liven it up by beginning with his two brightest creative sparks on the substitutes' bench.

It meant James Maddison and Harvey Barnes sat back and watched as Smith attempted to stave off relegation courtesy of a new-look, unexpectedly mean, back five featuring Jonny Evans at its heart. With Evans and Harry Souttar impressing that quintet deserves credit for maintaining a rare clean sheet.

It possibly helped their cause that Leicester's midfield did not have to contend with Joelinton after Howe's Brazilian midfielder sustained an injury in the warm up, prefacing the way for Elliot Anderson to deputise.

Meanwhile, Joelinton's compatriot and midfield partner, Bruno Guimarães was perhaps a little fortunate to remain on the pitch after planting his studs in Boubakary Soumaré's thigh in the 10th minute.

That incident triggered a VAR review but, ultimately and contentiously, it was decided that the yellow card produced by Andre Marriner would suffice.

The only trouble was that his players could not seem to loosen up sufficiently to faze Smith's suddenly assured looking rearguard. With Newcastle missing their customary pressers in chief, the injured Joe Willock and Joelinton, they could not quite force their usually intense high tempo and Evans, Souttar and co duly second guessed repeated attacking manoeuvres.

Whenever Howe's players enter their trademark pre-match huddles, England's Kieran Trippier reminds his teammates that "pressure is a privilege" but it looked like the stress of having one foot on the European mainland was suddenly burdening a team starting to seem fatigued.

Nonetheless, Leicester's Wilfred Ndidi was required to clear Callum Wilson's header off the line with Daniel Iversen beaten after the England striker's original shot rebounded off the inside of a post as Newcastle forced repeated corners.

Smith's side lived dangerously once more when Miguel Almirón met Fabian Schär's headed flick on the half volley before hitting a post but Alexander Isak could not quite direct the rebound on target.

Leicester's manager responded by pressing the tactical button marked "Maddison" at half-time, sending the attacking playmaker on for the second period in place of Kelechi Iheanacho. Along with several teammates Jamie Vardy's supposed partner in crime had barely touched the ball but now Maddison was playing just behind Leicester's No 9 and Schär and Sven Botman needed to be on their guard.

Leicester's problem was they rarely retained possession for long enough to stretch Howe's centre halves. Instead they largely continued in backs-to-the-wall mode, surviving a VAR check for handball when Youri Tielemans blocked a shot from the increasingly influential Almirón.

Iversen, who had earlier seemed a little shaky, came to the visiting side's rescue courtesy of a fabulous save to somehow tip Isak's imperiously rising shot over the bar one-handed. Significantly that chance was conjured by Almirón, a forward reborn under Howe's tutelage.

By now Smith had no real option bar indulging in a bit of risk-taking and, sure enough, he replaced Evans and Vardy with Harvey Barnes and Patson Daka as his side switched to a back four.

With Guimarães heading against a post from a yard out that tactical rejig made little discernible difference until Pope's sublime last-gasp save from Castagne left Smith emitting anguished expletives and Newcastle in wonderland.

How they stand

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Man City **C**	36	28	4	4	93	31	+62	**88**
Arsenal	37	25	6	6	83	43	+40	**81**
Newcastle	37	19	13	5	67	32	+35	**70**
Man Utd	36	21	6	9	52	41	+11	**69**
Liverpool	37	19	9	9	71	43	+28	**66**
Brighton	36	18	7	11	70	50	+20	**61**
Aston Villa	37	17	7	13	49	45	+4	**58**
Tottenham	37	17	6	14	66	62	+4	**57**
Brentford	37	14	14	9	57	46	+11	**56**
Fulham	37	15	7	15	54	51	+3	**52**
Crystal Palace	37	11	11	15	39	48	-9	**44**
Chelsea	36	11	10	15	36	42	-6	**43**
Wolves	37	11	8	18	31	53	-22	**41**
West Ham	37	11	7	19	41	53	-12	**40**
Bournemouth	37	11	6	20	37	70	-33	**39**
Nottm Forest	37	9	10	18	37	67	-30	**37**
Everton	37	7	12	18	33	57	-24	**33**
Leicester	37	8	7	22	49	67	-18	**31**
Leeds	37	7	10	20	47	74	-27	**31**
Southampton **R**	37	6	6	25	32	69	-37	**24**

Tomorrow **Brighton v Man City** (8pm)
Thursday **Man Utd v Chelsea** (8pm)
Sunday (all 4.30pm) **Arsenal v Wolves, Aston Villa v Brighton, Brentford v Man City, Chelsea v Newcastle, C Palace v N Forest, Everton v Bournemouth, Leeds v Tottenham, Leicester v West Ham, Man Utd v Fulham, Southampton v Liverpool**

Newcastle
4-3-3
Pope: Trippier, Schär, Botman, Burn; Longstaff, Guimarães●, Anderson (Murphy 77) ; Almirón (Gordon 88), Wilson (Saint-Maximin 68), Isak●
Subs not used
Dubravka, Dummett, Lewis, Targett, Miley, Ashby

Leicester
3-5-2
Iverson; Souttar, Evans (Daka 63), Faes; Castagne, Ndidi (Mendy 89), Tielemans, Soumaré, Thomas; Iheanacho (Maddison ht), Vardy (Barnes 63)
Subs not used
Smithies, Kristiansen, Amartey, Praet, Tetê

Referee Andre Marriner **Attendance** 52,152



Leicester ride luck to hold on for draw

Newcastle's Bruno Guimarães hits the post from close range during the second half of a one-sided contest
LEE SMITH/ACTION IMAGES/REUTERS

Analysis
Andy Brassell *St James' Park*

Magpies' transformation in joining the European elite is testament to Howe's coaching

The roar at kick-off, the roar that had been there in most of the previous 18 home games of this season, was maybe given a few extra decibels here. Added to renewed hope, present all season, was a touch of yes, this really is happening.

Then came the moment, with fireworks being wedged into the tops of milk bottles, at the beginning of stoppage time, when Nick Pope was finally forced into some sort of movement to deny Timothy Castagne, to make sure it did happen. It came after one of the Newcastle keeper's slowest days of the season, after what had often resembled a half-pitch, beat-the-packed-defence training exercise against a Leicester team largely too meek to threaten Geordie dreams.

After the opening roar at St James' often comes the hush, the tension that describes how much it means in this city. It fell over the stadium after Brighton's Deniz Undav pulled a goal back here last Thursday night, but this is the way of things here now. That blanket of quiet used to fall over this stadium as a portent of impending calamity. Now it rolls in because there is something to lose. Because there is hope.

That's what it was always about in Newcastle. If any potential sense of wonder at a gatecrasher to the established order is tempered by misgivings over the club's ownership in the wider football supporting community, it is not a sentiment widely shared here. In a city that often feels misunderstood by the world



▲ *Eddie Howe salutes the crowd after Newcastle secured a top-four finish*

outside, it was never about pipe dreams of seeing Kylian Mbappé or Neymar posing for the cameras, stottie in hand. It was about finding a way out from the reviled Mike Ashley. It was about reconnecting with their club.

The transformation on the pitch has, likewise, been about care and attention to detail rather than sweeping, grand gestures. While Bruno Guimarães, Kieran Trippier and latterly Alexander Isak have been major contributors, the real triumph of this season (as with the last) has been in Eddie Howe's coaching – authentically coaching, improving players who looked perfect only for treading water just above the relegation line.

That Fabian Schär, Miguel Almirón, Joe Willock and company have become decisive players is a huge testament to the work of Howe and his team.

As they crammed into those 52,152 precious places – some of which they were literally giving away in the dark, not-so-distant past of the Ashley reign – minds started to wander to next season, even if this one has been good enough to linger long in the mind.

Where might it be? Milan? Madrid? As Bob Marley's Three Little Birds sauntered out of the tannoy before kick-off, thoughts of an overnight boat trip to Amsterdam sprang to mind, should Ajax make it. That is another one of those pinch-me aspects to all this. Newcastle have qualified for the Champions League ahead of the Dutch giants, who might not manage it – waiting and hoping like Milan, Inter, Marseille and the rest.

It's going to take a while to absorb. Sat in the front rooms of Longbenton, Gateshead, Gosforth and Coxlodge in late August, these will be a rare set of supporters not shouting at the television telling Uefa to get on with it. They will want to savour every second. On those longed-for Champions League nights this game will quickly fade from the memory, a necessary routine check of photo ID and boarding pass before getting on the flight to glory. If the celebration was to be savoured by these fans this was tough for a set of weary players, who had given everything and more four days before against Brighton and looked dead on their feet at the end of it.

It had been a surprise to see Joelinton, one of those who paid the highest physical toll in that game, in the XI named here and he pulled up in the warmup, to be replaced by Elliot Anderson.

The woodwork may not have wanted to play ball with the stands wanting their gala ending denying Callum Wilson, Almirón and Guimarães. No matter. In contrast with those hardy travelling fans, gamely chanting "Leicester 'til I die" from up on level seven, Newcastle's faithful are no longer seeing their beloved team stymied by neglect.

Top-four dream
'This wasn't in our sights at start of season'

Louise Taylor
St James' Park

Eddie Howe said that Newcastle have made faster progress than expected as he hailed his team's "amazing achievement" in qualifying for the Champions League after being involved in a relegation skirmish only last season.

"We've shot ahead of schedule and that brings big challenges for the future," said Howe following the 0-0 draw against Leicester which guaranteed Newcastle a top four finish.

"But you have take these opportunities and it feels amazing. It's an amazing achievement to go from where we've come from to here. It's emotional; I'm very proud of everyone connected with the club.

"This wasn't in our sights at the start of the season. We'd just escaped relegation and we were hopeful of growing and competing for Europe in a couple of seasons time so I can't compliment the players enough. It would have been very easy to fade away but we didn't."

A smiling Howe seemed to struggle to comprehend he had become the first manager to lead Newcastle into the Champions League since Sir Bobby Robson 20 years ago. "I still have a lot of prove but I always hoped to bring success here," he said. "I don't know how I'll celebrate but I hope it's not with a tea and biscuit.

"The Champions League is the best competition to be in, to break into that monopoly is quite something. Although I'm not outwardly emotional, inwardly I am. It's very special to be part of something very special that will hopefully be talked about for years to come. It's been an amazing season."

Leicester, the 2016 champions, are now dependent on Everton failing to beat Bournemouth on Sunday, while they win against West Ham.

Even so, Dean Smith had no regrets about starting with a back five on Tyneside. "I make no apologies for the way we set up," said Leicester's interim manager whose side maintained a rare clean sheet. "It was a real battling performance. We hadn't kept a clean sheet for so long and where we are now is because of that."

Arsenal keen to win race for Gündogan to close gap on City

Nick Ames

Arsenal are pursuing a move for Ilkay Gündogan as Mikel Arteta looks to reshape his midfield for a sustained title push next season.

Gündogan is out of contract this summer and his future at Manchester City is uncertain. The champions are likely to offer him a new deal while Barcelona also hold a firm interest, but Arsenal have entered the running for his signature and the prospect of working alongside Arteta may appeal to the 32-year-old.

The pair worked together during Arteta's spell as assistant to Pep Guardiola at City, and the Arsenal manager has previous for persuading former colleagues to move south. Gabriel Jesus and Oleksandr Zinchenko arrived from City last summer and made significant impressions in a team that ultimately fell short of taking the title race to the wire.



▲ *Ilkay Gündogan will be available on a free transfer this summer*

Gündogan, though, has been more important to City than either Jesus or Zinchenko. He has been in brilliant form this season, scoring nine times and putting in a string of influential performances while captaining the side, and his arrival would constitute a major coup despite his advanced years. The deciding factor may be the length of contract available: Guardiola wants to keep Gündogan but the player is likely to require a deal of two guaranteed years if his spell in Manchester, which began in 2016, is to be extended.

Arteta's midfield will have room for a senior figure when Granit Xhaka, who is close to joining Bayer Leverkusen, departs after seven years at the club. Arsenal remain front runners in the race for West Ham's Declan Rice, although they may face competition from Manchester United to close what will be an expensive transfer. Mason Mount, whose contract at Chelsea ends next season, is also on their radar.

Liverpool write to PGMOL over Villa decisions

Andy Hunter

Liverpool have asked Professional Game Match Officials Limited (PGMOL), the professional referees' body, to explain two contentious decisions that went against Jürgen Klopp's side during the draw against Aston Villa on Saturday.

Liverpool's hopes of qualifying for the Champions League were all but ended by the 1-1 draw at Anfield, where the referee John Brooks disallowed a Cody Gakpo goal for offside and showed the Villa defender Tyrone Mings only a yellow card for a high, studs-up foul on Gakpo.

Brooks was sent to the pitchside monitor by VAR after Gakpo scored what would have been an equalising goal. He disallowed the effort for an offside against Virgil van Dijk, having decided Ezri Konsa had not made a deliberate play to the ball.

Brooks booked Mings for his challenge and VAR reviewed the incident.

Liverpool want clarification on both decisions and have written to PGMOL to ask for an explanation.

The Liverpool manager was serving a touchline ban on Saturday as a consequence of comments about the referee Paul Tierney after the 4-3 win against Tottenham. Brooks was the fourth official who Klopp ran up to when celebrating the winner that day.

Serie A

Juventus set to miss Champions League after points penalty

Juventus have been docked 10 points in a new ruling by the Italian football federation's appeals court after an investigation into the club's transfer dealings found evidence of false accounting. The decision drops Juve from second place to seventh in Serie A, making it highly unlikely they will reach the Champions League.

In January the club were handed a 15-point penalty. Several members of the former board were also given bans from football activities, including the former president Andrea Agnelli.

The points deduction was suspended last month on appeal to the country's highest sports court within the Italian Olympic Committee and referred back to the football federation's appeals court for a new trial.

In a three-hour hearing yesterday the federation prosecutor Giuseppe Chiné requested an 11-point penalty for Juventus. Chiné also sought eight-month bans for seven former Juve directors, but they were cleared yesterday. Appeals by Agnelli and three others were rejected last month.

The Juventus board resigned in November after an investigation by Turin public prosecutors into alleged false bookkeeping. A trial was then reopened based on information from the Turin prosecutors, leading to the points deduction. A sports court had cleared Juventus the previous April.

The club said: "Juventus Football Club … reserves the right to read the reasons to evaluate a possible appeal." **Associated Press**

Interview
Boris Becker on Raducanu fears and watching tennis in prison



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Sid Lowe
La Liga can no longer ignore racist abuse of Vinícius

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Sport

‘I’ve lived a dream’
Cavendish to retire after one final shot at Merckx’s record

Sean Ingle

Mark Cavendish has confirmed that he will call time on his glittering cycling career at the end of the season. The announcement came on the final rest day at the Giro D’Italia, with the 38-year-old saying: “I’ve lived an absolute dream.”

Throughout his career Cavendish was known as the “Manx Missile” because of the way he finished in high-speed sprints. His power and fearlessness has brought him 161 victories since 2005, as well as two green Tour de France points jerseys, a Rio 2016 Olympic silver omnium medal and the 2011 road world championship rainbow jersey.

Cavendish refused to be drawn on where his final race would be. But surrounded by his wife Peta and family, he said: “This is a perfect opportunity to say with absolute joy in my heart that this will be my final season as a professional cyclist. When you understand it’s not forever, it’s easier to enjoy every feeling this sport has to offer.”

Cavendish also confirmed he would be heading to the Tour de France with his team Astana Qazaqstan this summer. But while he shares the record of 34 stage victories in the race with Eddy Merckx, he insisted that beating the record was not the sole priority before he officially retires. “If I was on 45 wins on the Tour de France, I’d still be going to the Tour de France to win,” he said. “If I was on 18, I’d be looking for 19.”

The Manxman, who celebrated his 38th birthday on Sunday, admitted it was the right time to call it a day. “Like many others I’ve been struggling with sickness during the race as well as the effects of some unfortunate crashes,” he said. “To get me through, I can’t thank this group of friends enough.

“ Cycling has been my life for over 25 years and the bike has given me the opportunity to see the world and meet some incredible people. It’s taught me so much about life - dedication, loyalty, companionship, teamwork, sacrifice, humility and perseverance - all things that now, as a father, I can show my children.

“Today is my son Casper’s fifth birthday, fortunately it’s a rest day and I can spend his birthday with him. I think it’s important now that I can be there for every birthday for my wife Peta and all our children.

“It’s important I can see all their school concerts and support them in their sporting competitions and it’s important I can run around with them without fear of injury or getting sick.”

British Cycling’s performance director, Stephen Park, paid tribute to Cavendish for what he called “a truly outstanding career”.

Park said: “Cav is without doubt the sport’s greatest sprinter and will be remembered by fans across the world for his 53 Grand Tour stage wins, and I’m sure that we will all be cheering him on as he looks to add to that total in his final months of racing.”

A glittering career, from brash youth to elder statesman

William Fotheringham *Page 36 →*



◀ *Mark Cavendish speaking yesterday when he confirmed he will be going to the Tour de France this summer looking for his 35th stage win*
ANTONIO CALANNI/AP



Point seals Champions League place for Newcastle

Newcastle	Leicester
0	0

Goalkeeper Nick Pope goes to celebrate with Sven Botman, Dan Burn and Fabian Schär
Match report *Page 38 →*

OWEN HUMPHREYS/PA

Majority of WCL games to be screened behind paywall

Exclusive
Sean Ingle

The majority of Women’s Champions League matches will be shown behind a paywall next season, with the broadcaster Dazn believing the time is right to “accelerate the value” of the women’s game.

Under Dazn’s new pay/freemium model, which was confirmed yesterday, 42 of the 61 games will be shown on the company’s subscription service, which costs £9.99 a month. But 19 games will remain free on YouTube - including the final, all of the quarter-finals and semi-finals and 12 from across the group stage.

Dazn’s global markets chief executive, Veronica Diquattro, said the development was a crucial step in helping to enhance the financial viability of the women’s game. “We have been growing the visibility of the WCL thanks to our partnership with YouTube,” she said.

“It has seen millions of streams on our Dazn platform, and also on our YouTube channel. But now the time is right to convert this visibility into viability and value for the long-term sustainability of the rights. Driving the commercial value upwards is how we can make sure there will be future investment in the sport for the benefit of the game and the players. And it’s in the interest of the clubs and Uefa.”

Dazn owns the global rights of the WCL from 2021 until 2025, and initially decided to stream all 61 games for free on its YouTube channel, which has more than 600,000 subscribers.

Diquattro said she saw the switch to a different model as the next step in women’s football. She hopes the majority of fans will support the move as it will allow clubs to have more money to invest in the sport and pay players what they deserve. “We have spoken to Uefa and YouTube and we are aligned. Because we are fighting for the same results - to accelerate the value of the women’s game.”

This year’s WCL final, between Barcelona and Wolfsburg, will be played on Saturday in the Philips Stadium in Eindhoven. •

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Putin belongs in jail. The US needs to act *Gordon Brown, page 4*
How opium was used by one empire to subdue another *The long read, page 5*

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The Guardian Tuesday 23 May 2023

Journal

Opinion and ideas



A protester in a Rishi Sunak mask outside Downing Street
PHOTOGRAPH: VUK VALCIC/ZUMA PRESS WIRE/SHUTTERSTOCK

Rishi Sunak promised truth in government. So where is it?

Peter Oborne



For all Rishi Sunak's claims to be a trustworthy prime minister, he is, in fact, in the mould of Boris Johnson. He has made misleading claims from the start of his premiership, and continues to do so. Take his first prime minister's questions on 26 October last year. To murmurs of approval from Conservative MPs, he told Labour's Richard Burgon: "We will always support our hardworking nurses."

To drive home his support, Sunak added: "That is why, when I was chancellor, we reintroduced the nurses' bursary." This was a misleading claim, as the new prime minister would have been well aware. It is true that, as chancellor, Sunak offered a new educational grant of £5,000 a year (increasing to £8,000 in some cases) for all nursing students on courses from September 2020. However, this fell significantly short of the bursary system, which had earlier been scrapped by the Conservative government.

It then got worse. In the same PMQs, Sunak told MPs that there had been "a record number of new homes built in the last year". This claim was false. As a report by the due diligence website Full Fact later concluded: "The most recent published data shows 173,520 new homes were completed in England in the year to June 2022, slightly down on the previous year."

This false claim quickly became an important test for Sunak. Johnson made scores of such boasts, leaving them on the Hansard record even after they'd been exposed as false. Had Sunak corrected his relatively minor mistakes, he could have sent a powerful signal. By choosing not to do so, he raises the question: does he share Johnson's contempt for integrity, even as he claims to lead a government of "integrity, professionalism and accountability at every level"?

Sunak entered Downing Street on the back of a promise to bring an end to the apparent disregard for the truth that was a defining feature of the Johnson and Truss premierships. He launched his campaign for the Tory leadership with a pledge to "restore trust, rebuild the economy and reunite the country". But his claims regarding the truth do not bear serious interrogation.

I assert this with confidence because I have been keeping a record of false claims uttered by British prime ministers ever since the Iraq war began in 2003. My file indicated that Tony Blair's immediate successors were relatively honest. This is not to say they were perfect. But they were certainly not habitual and shameless liars.

*

Peter Oborne *is a journalist and the author of The Assault on Truth*

2

Rishi Sunak promised truth in government. So where is it?

Peter Oborne

← Continued from front

All this changed the moment Johnson walked into Downing Street in July 2019.

Sunak has surprised me. In common with almost everyone else, I thought he would represent a reversion to traditional politics after the malign chaos of Johnson and Truss. But that has not been the case. Take the promise to "reduce debt", one of Sunak's five pledges at the start of 2023. Neither Sunak nor his chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, plan to reduce debt, as the March budget statement made explicit. On the contrary, it appears they mean to increase it substantially, while telling voters the opposite. According to the latest figures from the Office for Budget Responsibility, net debt stood at £2.5tn at the time of the budget, and is projected to rise every year till 2028, by which time it will have advanced to £2.9tn. Sunak should be all too familiar with these numbers. One former Conservative party communications expert told me that reducing debt "sounded better to voters".

Sunak's apparent readiness to mislead on such issues could send a message to cabinet subordinates to follow suit. The biggest culprit is the home secretary, Suella Braverman, who seems to operate in a post-truth world: denying that Brexit is to blame for Dover delays, and making inflammatory claims about Pakistani "grooming gangs" that have been proved false by her own officials. The controversy over her speeding fine is the latest test of Sunak's frequently broken promise to bring integrity back to government.

During International Trade Week last November, Michael Gove boasted on Twitter: "We've secured new free trade deals with over 70 countries since 2016. That's over £800bn worth of new global trade." His statement was not correct. Robert Chote, chair of the UK Statistics Authority, has since stated: "It is misleading to describe the £800bn figure as a measure of 'new global trade' resulting from the recent deals."

The health secretary, Steve Barclay, is one of a number of ministers who have made the wild claim that accepting public sector pay demands would cost £1,000 per household. Leading the way in this was Sunak, who appeared in front of an RAF base in Lincolnshire to announce: "What I'm not going to do is ask ordinary families up and down the country to pay an extra £1,000 a year to meet the pay demands of the union bosses." This prime ministerial claptrap has since been magisterially demolished by Chote. It's as if Sunak and his ministers don't respect facts at all.

There's a further category of misleading or false comments from Sunak: tactical. The Tories are determined to turn Keir Starmer's role as lieutenant to Jeremy Corbyn in the 2019 general election into a liability. This may explain why the prime minister asserted during PMQs late last year that Corbyn's national security agenda involved "abolishing our armed forces, scrapping the nuclear deterrent, withdrawing from Nato, voting against every single anti-terror law we tried, and befriending Hamas and Hezbollah". Labour's 2019 election manifesto proposed none of the above. Sunak has not corrected these false statements, despite being asked to do so by Corbyn. Note, however, that Starmer also emerges poorly from this exchange: the opposition leader did not correct Sunak.

Britain therefore has a monstrous problem. Before Sunak turned up in Downing Street, it was just about possible to explain the collapse of integrity after 2019 in terms of Johnson's incorrigible personal dishonesty. But Sunak appears to be yet another compulsively dishonest prime minister. This suggests a deep-rooted structural problem not just in the Conservative party but also in the House of Commons.

Sunak's pledge to bring back trust in British politics, reasserted so many times, appears itself to be insincere. This brings personal discredit, makes good government impossible and demonstrates how deeply political deceit has become embedded in our national life. Something has gone horribly wrong with the British system of government.

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'Comment is free... but facts are sacred' CP Scott

Politics

The home secretary's acumen has become a test of the prime minister's

Whether the home secretary, Suella Braverman, keeps her job is up to the prime minister, Rishi Sunak. That is in keeping with his prerogative powers to organise the composition of the government as he sees fit. But what happens when ministers hardly hide their disagreements or make a habit of defying the norms of behaviour expected of office-holders? That is the place where Ms Braverman seems to be heading - and she's been there before.

Last October, Ms Braverman was forced to resign as home secretary after confessing to a "technical" breach of the ministerial code. Her departure had been a long time coming. Ms Braverman had publicly contradicted her government's more liberal stance on immigration. She left office a day before the Truss administration fell. Mr Sunak reappointed Ms Braverman to the Home Office less than a week later. Last December, MPs on the public administration and constitutional affairs committee warned that this dishonourable affair set a "dangerous" precedent: "To allow this to take place does not inspire confidence in the integrity of government, nor offer much incentive to proper conduct in future". Those words seem prescient given what is happening now, on Mr Sunak's watch.

This week it emerged that last year, when she was attorney general, Ms Braverman was caught speeding and asked civil servants to help organise a one-to-one driving awareness course so she would not have to appear in a group. They rightly refused, arguing that this was a personal, not a policy, matter. Her request raises the issue of her judgment. But the way this matter is now handled threatens to become one of Mr Sunak's judgment.

The prime minister will have to decide whether Ms Braverman came clean about what happened at the time - and subsequently. Did she tell Mr Sunak about the incident before she was reappointed home secretary? Why did her special adviser deny the story when asked about it by the Daily Mirror earlier this year? If the prime minister feels Ms Braverman has questions to answer then he should have an inquiry into the affair. This would provide cover for Mr Sunak - who will continue to face questions over the episode - and if nothing too serious emerges, he could deliver a slap on Ms Braverman's wrist. But her fate is tied more to the current fractious politics of the Conservative party than to her conduct with the civil service. Her department is responsible for net migration, so her call to "get overall immigration numbers down" seems connected to her political ambitions. Ms Braverman's speech to the National Conservatism conference last week looked like an audition to be party leader.

The home secretary's rhetoric is an attempt to divert attention from her failure to meet the government's 2019 pledge to bring down net migration. Profound disagreements on post-Brexit immigration policy have split the Tories. These will be illuminated this week when, on her watch, net migration figures are expected to hit a record high. Cabinet colleagues rightfully see careerism in Ms Braverman's "authority of the people" bombast. However, her insouciance about the rules ought to make Mr Sunak think twice about a quick reprieve. Ms Braverman prefers politics to be guided by atavistic fears rather than economic self-interest. This lends itself to a competition where those who lie best win. Mr Sunak must surely want better for his party and this country.

Greek election

As the markets applaud, citizens will pay the price of continued austerity

On Sunday night, the Greek prime minister, Kyriakos Mitsotakis, triumphantly described his country's general election result as an "earthquake". After a remarkable victory, this piece of political hyperbole seemed almost justified.

Prior to the weekend, no ruling party had increased its vote share in Greece for more than 40 years. It had been predicted that a state wiretapping scandal, and the background to a catastrophic rail accident in February, could damage Mr Mitsotakis's prospects. Yet polls predicting a relatively close race proved wildly out, as the centre-right New Democracy party gained more than double the votes of its leftwing rival, Syriza. Having fractionally failed to win an absolute majority, Mr Mitsotakis may now trigger a second election - to be held under a different proportional system - which would be likely to hand him a handsome mandate.

Mr Mitsotakis won big partly because of signs of economic progress, and partly because voters scarred by the eurozone debt crisis sought stability and continuity. The government was able to point to a variety of reassuring indicators. Foreign direct investment rose last year by 50%. The Greek economy, albeit from a very low base, is currently growing at twice the eurozone average. After three bailouts totalling €280bn, international supervision of spending controls by lenders was finally ended last summer. Mr Mitsotakis's small state, tax-cutting platform was also combined with ruthlessly populist policies on migration, including a Trumpian pledge to extend a steel border fence along almost the entire length of Greece's border with Turkey.

Viewed from the left, however, this was as much an election lost as an election won. It may come to be seen as the grim finale to a political cycle that began in 2015, when Syriza's leader, Aléxis Tsípras, won a mandate to resist crushing austerity measures demanded by Brussels, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The circumstances of Mr Tsípras's subsequent U-turn - under extreme political duress as Greece teetered on the brink of leaving the euro - has subsequently fractured the left and undermined its credibility.

Having enacted sweeping austerity measures between 2015 and 2019, Mr Tsípras campaigned this time round on calls for greater welfare spending and public investment. It didn't wash. A high abstention rate, and Syriza's plummeting share of the vote, pointed to a loss of faith in Greece's main progressive party and its leader. The re-emergence of Pasok, the centre-left party eclipsed by Syriza at the time of the eurozone crisis, may point to a future realignment. Mr Tsípras's political future looks uncertain after what amounted to a humiliation.

For the sake of millions of households living close to the edge, Greece's opposition parties need to quickly regroup and find common ground. Mr Mitsotakis's market-friendly reforms may have delighted banks and investors, and reassured the comfortable middle classes. But the less well-off continue to suffer the dire consequences of punitive and sustained austerity. The Greek economy remains about a fifth smaller than it was before 2008. Levels of poverty and social exclusion are among the highest in Europe. Financial stability and the paying down of debt to international creditors has been achieved at the expense of general living standards. Mr Mitsotakis will deliver more of the same and the markets will cheer him for it. After a dismal night, progressive forces need to find a way back into the conversation.

Voters are waking up to the injustice of the super-rich

Polly Toynbee



The prime minister sincerely hopes that we've "moved beyond judging people by what's in their bank account". Is that so? Attitudes to wealth and inequality are confusing and often inconsistent. But Rishi Sunak's phenomenal fortune seems deeply unhelpful for his electoral prospects.

His stratospherically wealthy peers have prospered exponentially, especially in the past decade, according to the latest Sunday Times rich list. Their gravity-defying golden era, untouched by the banking crash, Brexit or the pandemic, only this year suffered a blip. Sunak, the first prime minister to feature, and his wife, Akshata Murty, are listed at £529m, down from £730m last year. It's hard to comprehend such numbers. The pair lost £500,000 a day - a *day* - for 12 months, yet even that is too little to touch lifestyles in this hyper-realm.

Does it matter that Sunak belongs to this tiny golden clan? Yes, say the pollsters. "His wealth is beyond comprehension," says Chris Hopkins of Savanta. "People feel he's out of touch. How can he legislate on the cost of living, with no experience of their lives?" Labour ads go for the jugular: "Do you think it's right to raise taxes for working people when your family has benefited from a tax loophole? Rishi Sunak does."

Labour's own research finds Sunak's super-wealth "matters a lot, as it means he can't imagine, and so doesn't care, about people's reality", one Labour source told me. Attacking his wealth shows Labour no longer fears being accused of "the politics of envy" but expects to strike a chord with its own "politics of empathy".

The richest 1% are now seen as more powerful than government, reports a cross-party group of MPs: 39% rank the very rich as most powerful, while only 24% think governments hold the real power, reversing opinion in the past five years. Prof Bobby Duffy, the director of the Policy Institute, described this as "a remarkable shift in a short period of time".

Yet wealth is still tricky political terrain. How people make money matters: Fairness Foundation polling shows entrepreneurs and sports stars are seen as deserving; so are landlords, whose wealth is seen as fair by 53%, unfair by only 13%. But the figures for financiers are not as convincing. Inheritance wealth, says the poll, is "fair" for both new-money and old-money heirs; and while the progressive instinct is to raise inheritance tax, the public is in favour of inherited wealth. Protecting your children is a reflex deeper than politics.

The question of who is rich is fraught. A fascinating new book, Uncomfortably Off: Why the Top 10% of Earners Should Care About Inequality, by Marcos González Hernando and Gerry Mitchell, surveys unhappiness and insecurity at the top. The wealthiest 10% constitute the most unequal group, stretching from those who earn £60,000 at the bottom to the 0.1% whose multimillions and billions shoot off the graph. This powerful group are leaders of business and professions, yet are almost all much further from the top than they are to the median.

Most of them feel increasingly insecure, running on a hamster wheel, yet making little progress as pay retreats for them, too. Because they're more likely to compare themselves to those above them, rather than those below, they don't feel rich, and tend to be ignorant of how far above the ordinary they are. They feel insecure. According to the Institute for Fiscal Studies in the book, a quarter won't be in the top 10% in a year's time. Half will fall out of this category within five years, due to economic shocks, illness or bad luck.

They think they're already overtaxed, seriously underestimating how much they need state services over the course of their life, particularly during their expensive elderly years. Austerity has so damaged society that the worse public services become - ambulance response times, unprosecuted crimes and cash-strapped schools - the less willing people are to pay more tax to fund these services. They fear that their children, who already earn less, will be unable to afford their parents' lifestyle. The book is addressed to these 9.9% of people, warning them of worse to come. Investing in a good society will do them more good than trying and failing to mimic the isolated individualism of the super-rich.

The 9.9%, like the rest, want the super-rich to pay more. Agreeing with Denis Healey's famous promise, which he made about property developers, most voters think it's now time to squeeze the rich until "the pips squeak", which doesn't augur well for Rishi Sunak.



ILLUSTRATION: MATT KENYON

Speed limits are not all that Braverman is unaware of

Simon Jenkins



Trivial is the default mode of British politics. Whether or not the home secretary did ask civil servants and an aide to help her get out of a group speed-awareness course - and if she did, whether she was right to do so - is not the most urgent issue of the day.

Yet, as MPs this week gathered round the Westminster village pump, it pushed immigration, the NHS, Ukraine and the G7 off the agenda.

Suella Braverman had few qualifications for high office and even fewer to handle Britain's vexed immigration challenge. Her workload would indeed be a fit topic for discussion. But she has also, like the archbishop of Canterbury, fallen foul of Britain's speed limits.

Reportedly, Braverman first inquired of a civil servant, who correctly but fastidiously refused it as a private matter. She then asked her political adviser, who inquired and was told she had to do a normal course. For a senior minister guilty of a minor offence this process seems reasonable, albeit with a suspiciously harsh outcome. Braverman took it on the chin, paid the fine and took three points on her licence, rather than doing the course.

There is a demarcation line between private and public duties that the civil service must respect in the taxpayer's interest. It will be up to Rishi Sunak and his ethics adviser, Laurie Magnus, to determine if that line was crossed here, and whether the ministerial code has been broken. But in the affair as a whole, Parkinson's law of triviality has applied: the less the importance, the more the attention. The Braverman affair is like the Chequers chef trying to work out whose lunch should be credited to which departmental budget, while the massive defence estimates are being passed on the nod.

One upside might be that the home secretary and archbishop of Canterbury form a lobby to induce a less centralist attitude to speed limits. Some make sense, some should be lower and some higher. This should depend on local context, not central guidance.

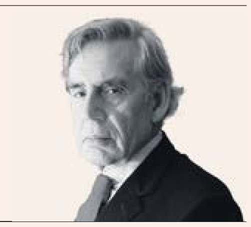
London has been reduced to a heaving morass of roadworks, low traffic neighbourhood diversions and a one-size-fits-all, 20mph speed limit in several boroughs. London drivers now have eyes only for their speedometers, yet it seems few vehicles - not taxis, buses, motorbikes or even police cars - stick to the 20mph limit. The result is a vast speed trap available to any local authority eager to boost its income.

Braverman's speeding ticket thus joins Downing Street parties and non-dom spouses in the dressing-up cupboard of British politics. Much of this kind of behaviour may be reprehensible, but its evils should be kept in proportion, otherwise they risk crowding out discussion of things that really matter. MPs should go on a seriousness awareness course.



Putin belongs in jail. The US needs to act

Gordon Brown



A new grassroots campaign calling for the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, to be tried for war crimes represents an escalation in the demand for justice for the people of Ukraine. Already 2 million people have signed a petition calling for Putin's indictment.

Now, in the run-up to August's Brics summit (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), to be held in Johannesburg, more than half a million have already called for the South African authorities to put him in prison if he flies into their country.

The Russian leader's recent indictment by the international criminal court (ICC) for overseeing the abduction of Ukrainian children is the reason why he can now be arrested on the soil of any country that is signed up to its statutes. Russia has since retaliated by issuing an arrest warrant for the British prosecutor of the ICC, Karim Khan. Russia remains adamant that Putin will take part in the Brics summit, but a special government commission established by South Africa's president, Cyril Ramaphosa, has concluded that Putin's presence would violate not only international law but also the laws of South Africa, and he is advising Putin not to attend.

The South African action is important because in April the supreme decision-making body of the ruling African National Congress had complained about the "unequal" and "often selective application of international law". Ramaphosa reported that the ANC had decided to withdraw South Africa from membership of the court, although it was later clarified as an "error in a comment" and it was confirmed that South Africa would honour its obligations.

The campaign to arrest Putin comes at a significant moment in the war, with Ukrainian troops about to move on to the front foot with a spring offensive designed to retake control of the bridgehead to Crimea. Running an "arrest Putin" campaign alongside this military counterattack piles additional pressure on the leader and his cabal, who now know they are personae non gratae in most continents of the world and liable to be arrested if they travel outside Russia.

Earlier this year, ICC investigators set out their first body of evidence justifying arrests, confirming that Russia had abducted thousands of Ukrainian children. But this is only the start, with further charges to follow. Rape, torture, mutilation and the indiscriminate bombing of innocent civilians are among the war crimes and crimes against humanity now under investigation. The question is which charge is most likely to succeed in securing convictions. Evidence for war crimes has to be amassed in a way that links Putin directly to acts of brutality and this involves detailed investigatory work that could take years.

However, the charge of aggression is provable by reference to the clear evidence of the decisions made to occupy Ukrainian territory. While the ICC does not have the power to charge Putin with this foundational crime, a special tribunal, modelled on the court set up at Nuremberg to try Nazi war criminals, could do so.

This week the president of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, used the meeting of the Council of Europe to intensify her call for a "dedicated tribunal to bring Russia's crime of aggression to trial", citing two options: a tribunal based on a multilateral treaty under which a group of countries such as the Council of Europe agree to act in unison; or a special hybrid court founded on both Ukraine's own domestic crime of aggression and international law.

Such a tribunal, which would be vetoed by Russia at the United Nations security council, could be mandated by a majority vote of the 193 members of the UN general assembly, which could charge Putin with planning to invade Ukraine, starting in 2014 when his troops descended on Crimea.

Whatever happens, August will represent a fork in the road. Either Putin attends the Brics summit, risking arrest, or by staying away he exposes his fear of being arrested.

The next stage of the campaign to put Putin behind bars will then require upfront American engagement. Joe Biden has said he favours Putin's arrest but the US still shies away from bringing a special tribunal into being. We have to remind them that it is not enough to will the ends: we have to will the means.

*
Gordon Brown *was UK prime minister between 2007 and 2010*

The long read



For centuries, the human weakness for mind-altering substances has been exploited as a tool for imperial subjugation. The opium wars were just the start.

By *Lewis Dartnell*

HOW OPIUM SHAPED HISTORY

The long read

Humans are an exquisitely intelligent and capable species of ape. Our physiology has been fine-tuned for efficient long-distance running; our hands are elegantly dextrous for manipulating and making; and our throats and mouths give us astonishing control over the sounds we make. We are virtuoso communicators, able to convey everything from physical instructions to abstract concepts, and to coordinate ourselves in teams and communities. We learn from each other, from our parents and peers, so new generations don't have to start from scratch. But we're also deeply flawed, physically and mentally. In many ways, humans just don't work well.

We're also riddled with defects in our biochemistry and DNA – data-corrupted genes that no longer work – which means, for instance, that we must eat a diet more varied than almost any other animal to obtain the nutrients we need to survive. And our brains, far from being perfectly rational thinking machines, are full of cognitive glitches and bugs. We're also prone to addictions that drive compulsive behaviour, sometimes along self-destructive paths.

Many of our faults are the result of evolutionary compromise. When a particular gene or anatomical structure is needed to satisfy several conflicting demands at the same time, no single function can be perfectly optimised. Our throats must be suitable not only for breathing and eating, but also for articulating speech. Our brains need to make survival decisions in complex, unpredictable environments, but they need to do so with incomplete information and, crucially, very rapidly. It is clear that evolution strives not for the perfect, but merely the good-enough.

What's more, evolution is restricted, in finding solutions to new conditions and survival problems, to tinkering with what is already at its disposal. It never gets the chance to go back to the drawing board and redesign from scratch. We have emerged from our evolutionary history as a palimpsest of overlaying designs, with each new adaptation modifying, or being built on top of, what already existed. To be human is to be the sum total of all our capabilities and constraints – our flaws and our faculties make us who we are. And the story of human history has played out in the balance between them.

About 10 millennia ago, we invented agriculture, and out of this grew increasingly complex social organisations: cities, civilisations, empires. And over this whole, staggering breadth of time, through growth and stagnation, progress and regression, cooperation and conflict, slavery and emancipation, trading and raiding, invasions and revolutions, plagues and wars – through all this tumult and fervour, there has been one constant: ourselves. In almost all key aspects of our physiology and psychology, we're basically the same as our ancestors living in Africa 100,000 years ago. The fundamental aspects of what it means to be human haven't changed.

Although we haven't changed, our physical features, such as our five-fingered hands and our capacity for speech, have certainly left indelible marks on our world. Aspects of our psychology, too, have left their impression on human history and culture in profound and often surprising ways.

Many of these are so deeply ingrained in everyday life that we tend to overlook their biological roots. For example, we have a tendency towards herd behaviour – fitting in with those in our community by copying their decisions. In evolutionary terms, this has served us well. In a world full of dangers, it is probably safer to follow everyone else, even if you're not convinced it's the best course of action, rather than risk going it alone. Such herd behaviour is a way of crowdsourcing information – others may know something we don't – and can serve as a quick judgment tool, allowing us to economise on the time and cognitive effort in deciding everything for ourselves.

Our herding bias has caused the surges of fads and fashions throughout history. It influences the adoption of other cultural norms, religious views or political preferences as well. But the same psychological bias also destabilises markets and financial systems. The dotcom boom of the late 1990s, for instance, was driven by investors piling in to back internet companies even though many of the startups were not financially sound. Investors followed one another, assuming that others had a more reliable assessment or simply not wanting to be left behind in the frenzy, only for the bubble to burst and stock markets to fall sharply after early 2000. Such speculative bubbles have recurred through history since "tulip mania" in the early 17th-century Netherlands, and the same herding behaviour is behind modern boom and bust cycles such as in cryptocurrency markets.

One of the most salient aspects of humanity is how, as an intelligent, self-aware species, we actively seek ways to alter our state of mind. We exploit the botanical world not only to feed ourselves, but to intentionally modify the functioning of our brain – to stimulate, to calm or to induce hallucinations. Indeed, enjoying getting out of our own minds is a universal of human cultures. The pursuit of money and power has found profitable ground in the human desire for altered states, and played a part in shaping human history.

Four substances in particular came to have widespread usage around the world: alcohol, caffeine, nicotine and opium. Each has been used widely as a recreational drug – that is, one taken socially or for pleasure rather than for medicinal purposes. While each of these have different effects on our central nervous system, they also all act to trigger a specific part of the brain.

The mesolimbic pathway runs forward from the brainstem and is made up of nerve cells that release the signalling molecule dopamine, which is enormously important in motivating our behaviour towards survival and reproduction. Eating food, quenching thirst or having sex all result in the release of dopamine and produce a reward signal in the brain – we perceive it as the sensation of pleasure.

In order to tune our behaviour to succeed in our natural habitat, our brain compels us to repeat the actions that activated the dopamine system last time and avoid those that previously suppressed it. Thus the neurochemical system of pleasure and reward is inextricably intertwined with that of learning.



Laudanum, containing morphine, was widely used in Britain in the 19th century
SSPL/GETTY

This dopamine-mediated mechanism works exceedingly well at steering our behaviour towards the sort of actions that benefit us in the natural world. Problems arose, however, when humans discovered ways of triggering this reward-and-pleasure system with stimuli other than those associated with survival and reproduction – namely, drugs.

Alcohol, caffeine, nicotine and opium effectively short-circuit our brain's reward system. They induce the release of dopamine in the mesolimbic pathway – or inhibit the removal of dopamine or make the receptors on the surface of neurones more sensitive – and in some cases they can produce pleasure, even euphoria, far more intense than anything encountered in the natural world. And unlike natural dopamine triggers, such as eating, they never result in satiation.

Such drugs create a false signal in the brain that indicates the arrival of a huge survival benefit, and the learning mechanism driven by this system prompts the brain to seek out repeated hits. This is the basis of addiction. We desire instant gratification without the costs associated with dopamine rewards in the natural world, such as spending time hunting for food.

With the rise of international trade, fermented beverages as well as distilled spirits, tea, coffee and tobacco became available around the world, and a huge fraction of humanity found ready access to psychoactive substances. While overconsumption of alcohol is the cause of societal problems, caffeine and nicotine generally produce only mild narcotic effects and an addiction no worse than the craving for a morning brew or drag on a cigarette (or a vape).

But in the 18th century the British demand for the stimulating effect of a cup of tea came to be supplied by the illicit trafficking of another psychoactive drug: opium. It is the story of how a mind-altering, addictive substance was used as a weapon by one empire to subdue another.

The demand for tea in Britain had grown steadily throughout the 18th century. By the 1790s, most of it came from China, with the East India Company shipping around 10,000 tonnes of tea leaves from east Asia to London every year. But there was one major problem: China had little interest in anything the British empire could offer in return. The Qianlong Emperor wrote to King George III in 1793, "Our Celestial Empire possesses all things in prolific abundance and lacks no product within its borders. There was therefore no need to import the manufactures of outside barbarians in exchange for our own produce." Britain was facing a colossal trade deficit.

The only European commodity that China desired was hard cash in the form of silver. Throughout the second half of the 18th century, therefore, about 90% of Britain's trade exports to China were bullion. The British government was struggling to raise enough silver, and the East India Company was becoming concerned about maintaining its profits.

But then the agents of the East India Company realised they could create a growing market for something that they could source in bulk. While the Chinese government would only consider silver for official trade, the Chinese people were keen on something else: opium.

Opium is the latex fluid exuded from cuts made in the immature seed capsules of certain varieties of poppy, which is then dried to a powder. This latex contains the analgesic compound morphine (and also codeine), which provides pain relief and produces a warm feeling of relaxation and detachment. Poppies were cultivated for their opium in Mesopotamia by the Sumerians from the third millennium BC and named "plants of joy". Opium use continued in the Middle East, as well as in Egypt, and the drug was known in ancient Greek medicine at least as early as the third century BC. By the eighth century AD, Arab traders had taken opium to India and China, and between the 10th and 13th centuries it made its way across Europe.

Taken orally, opium was used medically to treat pain. The morphine is able to bind to nerve cell



receptors (which are normally targets for the body's own hormones, such as endorphins) in parts of the brain involved in the sensation of pain, such as the thalamus, brainstem and spinal cord. But opiates also bind to receptors in the mesolimbic reward pathway, and so beyond its medicinal properties, opium was therefore craved as a recreational drug.

Opium was legal in Britain in the early 1800s, with British people consuming between 10 and 20 tonnes of the stuff every year. Powdered opium was dissolved in alcohol as a tincture called laudanum, which was freely available as a painkiller and even present in cough medicine for babies. Many late-18th and 19th-century literary figures were influenced by opium, including Lord Byron, Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, John Keats and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Thomas De Quincey found fame with his autobiographical Confessions of an English Opium-Eater. Drinking opium in this way produced mild narcotic effects but was also habit-forming – society at this time was therefore pervaded by high-functioning opium addicts, including many among the lower classes who were looking to numb the tedium of working and living in an industrialised urban world. But while laudanum helped inspire a few poets and fuelled bouts of aristocratic debauchery, it delivered a relatively slow release of opiates into the bloodstream.

The Chinese, on the other hand, had taken to smoking opium. This delivers a much more rapid hit, which is consequently far more potent and addictive. The Chinese probably first came across opium smoking in the 17th century in the Dutch colonial outpost in Formosa (Taiwan); the Portuguese then began shipping the drug from their Indian trading hub in Goa to Guangzhou (then known as Canton) in the 18th century. So, although the East India Company didn't create the initial demand for opium in China, they turbocharged it. They could bank on the key property of addictive substances: once you've gained a clientele for your product, you can be assured that your customers will keep coming back.

The British demand for the stimulating effect of a cup of tea came to be supplied by the illicit trafficking of another drug

British ships destroying a Chinese fleet during the first opium war in 1841

DEAGOSTINI/GETTY

Instead of sending silver to China, the East India Company trafficked opium – and they could effectively grow as much of this new currency as they needed. Before long, the company was pushing the drug in amounts never seen before. Ultimately, it boiled down to one addiction being traded for another – caffeine for opium – but the British were forcing a far more destructive substance on the Chinese. In order for the English mind to be focused with tea, the Chinese mind was fogged with opium.

The East India Company had seized control of Bengal from the Mughal empire after the Battle of Plassey in 1757. It came to establish a monopoly on opium cultivation in the region and started running the drug into China. Opium consumption for non-medicinal uses was outlawed in China – the first laws banning opium had been enacted in 1729 – and so the East India Company couldn't be seen to be illegally importing opium, as that would force a response from the emperor. Instead, it used independent "country firms" as middlemen – Indian merchants licensed by the company to trade with China. These firms sold the opium for silver in the Pearl River estuary, where it was then smuggled ashore.

This was a thinly veiled effort by the company to wash their hands of their formal involvement in the trafficking. As historian Michael Greenberg has put it, the East India Company "perfected the technique of growing opium in India and disowning it in China". Meanwhile, a network of opium distribution spread through China, helped by corrupt officials.

The East India Company expanded its pipeline pumping opium into China until, in 1806, the trade deficit had been forcibly reversed. Chinese opium addicts were now paying so much to feed their habit that Britain was making more money from selling opium than it was spending on buying tea. The silver tide had been turned and the precious metal began flowing from China to Britain for the first time. The amount of opium imported into China by the East India Company trebled between 1810 and 1828, and then almost doubled again by 1832, to about 1,500 tonnes every year. The British empire, fuelled in the early days of its expansion across the Atlantic by one addictive plant, tobacco, was now wielding another, the poppy, as a tool of imperial subjugation.

We may never know for sure just how many Chinese men (it was mostly a male habit) were addicted to opium by the 1830s, but estimates at the time ranged between 4 and 12 million. Although opium did destroy the lives of those heavily addicted – transforming them into stupefied zombies when high, and at all other times listless and craving their next visit to the opium den – the drug remained relatively expensive and so largely limited in accessibility to the mandarin and merchant classes in China. Given the relatively small percentage of the population directly affected, the catastrophe for China was less the public health consequences than the economic disruption. As the silver paid to the British



opium traffickers flowed out of China, the domestic supply diminished and the value of the precious metal rose. A farmer who had never touched an opium pipe now had to sell more of his crops to raise enough silver to be able to pay his taxes.

In 1839, the Daoguang Emperor declared a war on the drug and appointed a high-flying and moralistic bureaucrat, Lin Zexu, to stamp out the opium trade coursing through the coastal Guangzhou province, where the drug was landed by merchants at the port of Guangzhou itself. When he arrived at the foreign trading post in Guangzhou, Commissioner Lin ordered the British and other foreign merchants to immediately cease selling opium and hand over all the stock they had to be destroyed. The traders refused, and in response Lin had the doors of the factories nailed shut and their food supply cut off.

The chief superintendent of trade for the British in China, Capt Charles Elliot, attempted to defuse the standoff. He was able to persuade the traders in Guangzhou to turn over 1,700 tonnes of opium from the port storehouses by promising that the British government would reimburse them for their losses. Lin disposed of the seized opium, which was hugely valuable, by having it mixed with water and lime in huge pits and then dumping the sludge into the Pearl River. The drugs bust was so large that it took three weeks to destroy it all. Commissioner Lin thought he was doing his honourable duty to stamp out the illegal smuggling of opium that was eating away at his countrymen; but the events that day would lead to a clash of empires and a humiliating defeat for China.

The deal struck by Elliot in Guangzhou seemed to have satisfied everyone: Lin successfully seized the drugs cache and destroyed the contraband; the traders accepted the offer of getting paid full price anyway; and Elliot kept the port open to British trade. Everyone, that is, apart from the prime minister, Lord Melbourne, who soon learned that the superintendent in Guangzhou had jauntily promised this huge payout on his behalf. The government now had to find £2m (equivalent to £164m today) to compensate the drug dealers. A local drugs bust had become an international incident, not just affecting merchants but challenging national pride. Lord Melbourne felt backed into a political corner, and believed he had no

China endured an opioid crisis lasting 150 years, forced upon it by corporate greed and imperial coercion. Today, there is another



Above: an opium den in China in the early 1900s; left: a heroin addict in the US in 2016

KEYSTONE/GETTY; JOHN MOORE/GETTY

other choice but to use military action to force China to reimburse Britain for the destroyed goods.

The response was to become a common theme of European imperialism: gunboat diplomacy. A taskforce of around 4,000 British troops and 16 ships was dispatched to China, and the war lasted for three years, from 1939-42. Within the Royal Navy fleet was a new kind of ship, the Nemesis: a steam-powered warship made of iron, unmatched by anything the Chinese possessed. The British fleet blockaded the mouth of the Pearl River at Guangzhou and captured a number of ports including Shanghai and Nanjing. On land, Chinese armies were torn apart by British rifles. China had invented gunpowder and the blastfurnace, but now a European imperial power was arriving on its shores turning these innovations against it.

In July 1842, British ships and troops effectively closed off the Grand Canal, a crucial artery distributing grain throughout China. Beijing was threatened with famine, and the Daoguang Emperor was forced to sue for peace. The treaty of Nanjing was humiliating. China was forced to pay huge reparations for the confiscated opium and subsequent conflict, cede Hong Kong (the "fragrant harbour") to the British as a colony and open five "treaty ports", including Canton (Guangzhou) and Shanghai, to British merchants and other international trade. But the British were still not satisfied, leading, in 1856, to the second opium war, and the greater opening of China to foreign merchants as well as the full legalisation of the opium trade.

Recreational opium use expanded across China, extending from the urban elites and middle class to rural workers. By the time Japan invaded China in 1937, 10% of the population - 40 million people - were believed to be addicted to opium. It was not until after the communist takeover in 1949 and the arrival of the totalitarian regime of Chairman Mao that rampant opium addiction was finally stamped out in China.

China endured an opioid crisis lasting around 150 years, forced upon it by corporate greed and imperial coercion. Today, more than 250,000 hectares of land are used for opium poppy cultivation, the vast majority of it grown illicitly in Afghanistan. In a recent survey, about 10 million people in the US self-reported the non-medical use of opioids, although this figure is likely to be an underestimate (the survey data does not include the homeless or institutionalised populations, for instance). However, more than 90% of this opioid consumption is not heroin, but legally produced, painkilling pharmaceuticals misused by those who have become addicted to such medication.

This current opioid epidemic, echoing that in 19th century China, has its roots in the 1990s, when drug companies, including Purdue Pharma, looking to increase the prescription of opioid drugs, and thus their profits, convinced the regulators and medical community in the US that their synthetic opioid pills were not addictive. Patients were prescribed ever-higher opioid doses as they built up a tolerance, until many developed a dependence and became reliant on the drug to avoid nasty withdrawal symptoms. Millions of addicts continued to seek opioids on the hidden market, and between 1999 and 2020, more than half a million died from an opioid overdose. The US Department of Health and Human Services declared a nationwide public health emergency in 2017, and steps are being taken to control the opioid crisis, but overdose deaths from synthetic opioids such as tramadol and fentanyl continue to rise.

Our brain's system for governing reward and learning evolved to modify our behaviour for survival in our natural habitat, but is vulnerable to being hacked by psychoactive substances. Throughout history, humans have sought out recreational drugs that deliver a pleasurable rush, but as a consequence are intrinsically addictive. Through this fundamental aspect of our biology, substances that we consume to modify our mental state also came to change the world. ●

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This is an edited extract from Being Human: How Our Biology Shaped World History published by Bodley Head and available at guardianbookshop.com

Letters

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Established 1906

Country diary

May Moss, North Yorkshire

I'm standing in a bog surrounded by plantation and grouse moor. It is overlooked in more ways than I want to know by the dystopian hulk of the RAF Fylingdales radar station. But my guide is Brian Walker, a retired maverick forester, avid naturalist and spinner of excellent tales, so the invitation to visit was irresistible.

In 1974, Brian's friend and mentor, the botanist Margaret Atherden, persuaded the Forestry Commission not to plant this area, known as May Moss. Now I'm looking at the result. With each squelching step, the hummocky expanse of brown, gold and grey resolves into ling and cross-leaved heath, bog cotton and native cranberry. Beneath them are the bright green, claret and crimson colours of sphagnum mosses and, delightfully, the candy pink flowers of bog rosemary, which, along with cloudberry, occurs nowhere else on the North York Moors.

There's a small pool where geese nest and, in the shadow of a remnant block of spruce, a suntrap shimmers with bronzy-winged red damselflies, bees, moths and the emerald flicker of green hairstreak butterflies. Spiders attend gleaming webs. Common lizards skitter at our feet, and Brian warns me to watch for adders.

Brian points out an area of scattered pine and birch known as the adhaz (radiation hazard) because of historical radiation risk, and explains that by fencing it off, the Ministry of Defence inadvertently created the most untouched moorland heath in England. "It gives an idea what the moors could look like if burning stopped," he says. "Trees are often considered anathema to bog restoration, but they're spaced out, don't grow big. That place is teeming with life and the peat is six meters deep. Imagine, seven thousand years preserved under your feet."

It's not just the past and present of May Moss that excites Brian. Like Atherden, he thinks of the future. "Forestry doesn't get everything right," he says. "But with huge areas to work with we can experiment. Scrape back here, block a watercourse there, or we can suspend planting and just step back. It might take decades to see the benefits, but fine."

Amy-Jane Beer

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Indefinite jail terms are state-sanctioned cruelty

George Monbiot (Who will free our wronged and forgotten prisoners?, 18 May) succinctly captures many of the injustices of sentences of imprisonment for public protection (IPP). I wish to highlight two dimensions to this cruel and unusual punishment that were prevalent when I interviewed men serving the sentence as part of doctoral research I conducted as a (now former) prison chaplain.

First, the risk they pose to the public is an important consideration to a parole board – rightly so. But the effect that indeterminate incarceration has on their wellbeing is not given proportionate weight. The deterioration in mental health with associated increased self-harm and suicide risks are well documented. This is state-sanctioned cruelty.

Second, as Monbiot's article suggested, many people serving this sentence have come from tragic backgrounds. This hope-crushing sentence inflicts further harm, for which the system of incarceration is largely responsible.

What I experienced as most heartbreaking while a prison chaplain was that the humanity of those on an IPP sentence didn't seem to count as much as it did for others in custody. Public risk always trumped personal risk to their own wellbeing, and they were blamed for the predictable way that they responded to the systemic harm inflicted on them. So they remained trapped in this Kafkaesque nightmare.

Rev Dr David Kirk Beedon
Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire

● In 2008, Scotland introduced its equivalent to the IPP – the order for lifelong restriction (OLR) sentence. Two sentences meted out in the early years of the OLR carried a punishment of less than two years. Our son is one of those two prisoners. He was given an OLR of 17 months. Fifteen years later, he has spent one third of his life in prison and he is no nearer release.

There are no courses for him to attend, there is no attempt at rehabilitation and no process for him to show that he has made progress. He has had 13 parole board hearings, but it is unable to release him without the consent of the Prison Service. That consent cannot be given as our son does not have the means to prove his reduced risk. This revolving-door system is designed never to halt.

In 2021, our son was diagnosed with autism, which can reasonably be seen to have contributed to his misreading of cues that had him accused and convicted of sexual assault. The Prison Service does not accept that his diagnosis in any way reduces or influences his risk.

Our MSP has tried to help us raise the issue with the justice department, without success. We have written many letters to the justice secretary since 2018. The Scottish government maintains the value of the OLR; the saddest part is its inability to learn from the experience in England and Wales with the IPP.

Name and address supplied

● I work as a psychotherapist in prisons. My concern with IPP sentences is that they perpetuate prisoners' disempowerment. Prisoners' motivation is to behave within the constraints of their sentencing. They undertake psychological programmes, but have to live with the fear that whatever they say or do will reflect on whether they can be released. They present with a dependency on a system to "fix them" rather than a belief in their own potential for change. The IPP narrative that a person is a danger to the public indeterminately can be a self-fulfilling prophecy. Or it can be challenged and a prisoner allowed to change.

Name and address supplied

Saved from a life of shame by teachers

What a moving and relevant article about Katriona O'Sullivan ('What I've done is miraculous', 17 May). I was at school in the 1970s and a much-needed recipient of free school meals. Like Katriona, the teachers who "saw" me helped me to see past the shame I felt at being an outsider. I lived with an alcoholic mother and her abusive partner, and at the age of 12 I slept with my bedroom window unlocked so that I could jump from my first-floor room if needed, the insidious fear that her partner might rape me ever present. Shame kept me from ever telling anyone what was happening at home.

My mother kicked me out when I was 15, after her partner asked her to choose between us. I left school at 16, going straight into low-paid work. I took advantage of being able to retake my O-levels while claiming benefits and then did an access course that enabled me to complete a degree. I rewrote my story to a certain extent, but only because funding gave me that opportunity. The reference to there being a middle class "uniform" resonated; people assume so much because of how one dresses or speaks – they assume a set of shared values, and political and cultural beliefs. This is an important reminder and account of how wrong and outdated those assumptions are. I wish Katriona all the success and happiness she has fought for.

Name and address supplied

● Gosh, how Katriona O'Sullivan speaks for me. I am well aware that my life was saved by two of my teachers, a collective effort by my school that got me to university, and a support network of institutions through which my fees and a small maintenance allowance were paid. The parents of two of my friends made it possible for me to survive my last three years at school with some sense of what it feels like to be connected to a family. I too went on to work in second-chance education, and to rant fairly often about the ill-informed judgments of people who haven't been there themselves.

I doubt many teachers these days leave the school gate with the energy to care in the way some of my teachers did for me.

Name and address supplied

AI can't compete with the likes of Taylor Swift

There's a lot of noise from musicians about the threat of artificial intelligence, and Neil Tennant presents a useful counterpoint (Writing songs with help of AI is not a sin, says Pet Shop Boys founder, 16 May).

AI is a threat to musicians, but principally to the "factory" approach of turning out endless derivative pop. AI can, of course, generate yet another samey-sounding song and could replace any future Stock Aitken Waterman hit factory. It will not be able to replace original work.

No AI is going to turn out unique lyrics such as "Did you hear my covert narcissism I disguise as altruism" (Taylor Swift's Anti-Hero) for the simple reason that AI relies on guessing what a likely lyric would be.

Until lots of people start using "narcissism" in their lyrics, it will be absent from AI-generated songs. Talented musicians should welcome AI as it will make their unique songwriting skills stand out and have greater value.

Neil Babbage
Colchester

Corrections and clarifications

● **The guitarist Junior Kerr was later known as Junior Marvin, not "Murvin", when he was in Bob Marley and the Wailers (Linda Lewis obituary, 8 May, Journal, p6). Junior Murvin was a Jamaican singer.**

● **An artwork called America – an 18-carat gold toilet valued at £1m – was stolen from Blenheim Palace in September 2019, not last September (Student who ate banana from art installation was 'hungry', 2 May, p3).**

Editorial complaints and corrections can be sent to guardian.readers@theguardian.com

Our spare rooms can help house refugees

Regarding your article about the young professional from Kabul having to sleep rough (Afghan who worked for UK sleeping rough in London after he fled Kabul, 20 May), too many refugees are left homeless and destitute. Mohammad Seddeqi is welcome to stay in my home for as long as he needs. All those of us with spare rooms can help. Organisations like Refugees at Home and Room for Refugees always need new hosts.

Colleen Molloy
Leicester

● Liz Truss's visit to Taiwan has rightly been criticised by Alicia Kearns, the chair of the UK foreign affairs select committee, as "the worst example of Instagram diplomacy" (Report, 17 May). But her behaviour also calls to mind the bellicose US secretary of state John Foster Dulles, who was said to be "the only bull who carries his own china shop around with him".

Colin Burke
Cartmel, Cumbria

● Why is Sir Jim Ratcliffe described as the "second wealthiest person in Britain" (Jim Ratcliffe climbs up to second place in UK rich list, 20 May)? In 2020, this pro-Brexit patriot changed his tax domicile to Monaco, a move that is estimated to save him billions in UK taxation. I imagine Britain rarely sees him.

David Head
Peterborough

● Re Martin Amis's writing (Obituary, 22 May), it's worth recalling that in at least two of his books, Money and London Fields, he was writing, dazzlingly and dangerously, about a changing UK that was starting its journey to where we are now. These books are about the UK in 2023.

Jonathan Holland
Madrid, Spain



Neil Jameson

Founder of Citizens UK and driving force behind the living wage campaign

Neil Jameson, founder of the activist group Citizens UK, who has died aged 76, harnessed the power of community organising to achieve social and political change – most significantly as the driving force behind the living wage campaign. Citizens UK began in 1996 as a collective of east London churches, mosques and other community institutions called Telco (the East London Citizens Organisation), committed to trying to alleviate some of the social ills facing their congregations.

An early victory of which Jameson was particularly proud was persuading a local lard factory in Canning Town to install a filter, to alleviate the stench that was blighting the lives of local residents. But after a grassroots exercise identified poverty pay as the most pressing issue facing the community, the living wage campaign began to take shape.

Launched in 2001, it initially involved publicly targeting individual institutions that were employing workers from the East End, often through outsourced contracts, on wages that were legal, but impossible to live on. Jameson encouraged local people at the sharp end of London's economy to become the campaign's driving force.

At HSBC's annual meeting in 2003, one of the bank's cleaners, Abdul Durrant, politely confronted its chair, Sir John Bond, telling him, "we receive a whole £5 an hour, no pension, a miserly sick scheme. Our children go to school without adequate lunch."

Barclays became the first City bank to agree to pay the living wage – but HSBC and many other corporates followed, and as Telco broadened its reach across the capital, eventually becoming London Citizens before spreading UK-wide, it began to turn up the heat on politicians. Ken Livingstone adopted the living wage as London mayor in 2005, bringing the calculation of the rate into City Hall and rolling it out as a minimum for municipal workers.

Jameson in 2015. He was a committed Quaker whose political outlook was informed by his deep faith
LINDA NYLIND/THE GUARDIAN

In 2010, in a demonstration of the movement's pulling power, both David Cameron and Gordon Brown agreed to appear before a mass rally of Citizens UK activists at Methodist Central Hall three days before polling day, at which low-paid workers gave moving testimony about their lives.

Jameson told the Guardian in 2015: "I'm most proud of reviving political assemblies as the political tool for non-partisan people to show their power … If you have a packed room, in a democracy, people have to come to you."

Brown, whose frontbench career was about to come to an end, gave one of the speeches of his life, telling the assembled organisers: "If you fight for fairness, you will always find in me a friend, a partner and a brother." Cameron, who would shortly unleash deep public spending cuts, told the assembled activists, "you are the Big Society" – and left having promised to look at capping the extortionate cost of consumer credit.

More than 12,000 employers are now accredited by the Living Wage Foundation – the body Jameson helped to create, which calculates the living wage for London and the rest of the UK annually.

In 2015, the chancellor, George Osborne, paid the campaign the ultimate backhanded compliment when he boosted the minimum wage for over-25s, badging it the "national living wage" – though it was still well below the rate recommended by Citizens UK. Jameson and his colleagues felt what he called at the time, "a mixture of anger, flattery and concern"; but the number of companies signing up with the Living Wage Foundation continued to multiply. In all, Jameson ran Citizens UK and its predecessor organisations for almost three decades. He was appointed CBE in 2016.

> **"Low-paid workers gave moving testimony about their lives**

Jameson had been convinced of the power of community organising since a Churchill scholarship in the 1980s saw him visit the US to explore the legacy of the Chicago-based activist Saul Alinsky. Telco followed an initial experiment in Bristol, funded by the Barrow Cadbury Trust. He was a committed Quaker, whose political outlook was informed by his faith – though friends said he wore it lightly.

He was a social worker and a local government official before moving to work for children's charities – but became frustrated at the lack of opportunity to organise or empower the people he was employed to help.

Born in Tynemouth, North Tyneside, he was the son of Eric, a salesman, and Violet – the couple met as Sunday school teachers. Neil met his future wife, Jean Bird, when he was still at Solihull school, and she at the neighbouring girls' school. She had the lead part in the schools' joint production of Christopher Fry's Curtmantle and he was selling the tickets. The pair went to different universities – Neil to Bristol to study social science – but stayed in close touch, and went on voluntary service overseas (VSO) together in Sudan after graduating. They married in 1970.

Later in his life, Jameson began to take an interest in the challenges faced by refugees, becoming involved in an organisation called UK Welcomes Refugees, which supports local communities in sponsoring new arrivals.

Just weeks before he died, he contacted his friend Sir David Green, a former director general of the British Council, who was travelling in Pakistan, and asked him to go to Rawalpindi and meet an Afghan couple whose safe passage to the UK Jameson was trying to secure.

Despite a long-held scepticism about electoral politics, he became involved in the Green party, standing as a prospective parliamentary candidate in the east London constituency of Poplar and Limehouse in 2019 (he came fourth, with 3.5% of the vote).

He was due to stand in the recent local elections as a Green candidate in Burrator in west Devon, where he and Jean moved after retirement. Jameson died of an untreatable cancer that was diagnosed only days before his death. In his Who's Who's entry, he described his hobbies as, "strengthening civil society, promoting democracy, tennis and optimism".

He is survived by Jean and their four children, Ben, Ella, Will and Charlie, and seven grandchildren.

Heather Stewart

David Neil Jameson, campaigner, born 25 November 1946; died 24 April 2023

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Other lives



Lorraine Tollemache

Lecturer at the Tavistock Clinic in London responsible for co-founding its fostering and adoption team

My wife, Lorraine Tollemache, who has died aged 82, was an artist, teacher, social worker and psychotherapist. She was best known for her work as a senior clinical lecturer at the Tavistock Clinic in central London.

She was a co-founder of the Tavistock's fostering and adoption team, a co-convener of its fostering and adoption workshop, and, in 2006, a co-editor of the book Creating New Families: Therapeutic Approaches to Fostering, Adoption and Kinship Care. Lorraine also established training for social workers under the title of "children in transition", which became part of the Tavistock MA in advanced social work.

Born in Quetta, in what is now Pakistan, to Leila (nee Portlock) and Freddy Allen, a brigadier in the Indian Army, Lorraine was the eldest of three sisters. Her father was from Bray in County Wicklow, and she was proud of her Irish heritage. After Partition in India, the family travelled from Karachi to England on the Empire Windrush in 1947, and settled in Surrey.

Lorraine attended Guildford high school and then Roedean school in Brighton, East Sussex, where she excelled at English and art. She studied at Farnham Art School (now part of the University for the Creative Arts) and then at the Institute of Education, University College London, where she and I met. We married in 1962 and moved to Cornwall, both working at St Austell grammar school.

Lorraine was an imaginative art teacher who continued to paint, draw and produce ceramics throughout her life. We adopted two children, Billy and Rosa, in 1966 and 1971 respectively, and moved to Highbury, north London, in 1976, where our home was a testament to her visual flair and the location for many a spirited political and literary discussion.

She completed a degree in English at Bedford College, University of London, in 1976, next qualifying as a social worker at Chelsea College in 1979 and then as a psychoanalytic psychotherapist in 1990.

Fostering two children, volunteering at Holloway prison and carrying out social work at St Charles hospital in central London from 1980 to 1985, she established the foundations for her successful career at the Tavistock, working there from 1990 onwards as a senior clinical lecturer in social work in its child and family department. She retired in 2003.

Lorraine stayed fit well into older age. She loved walking, dancing and taking her grandchildren skating and swimming, impressing them with her ability to vault over a gate in her 70s. Even after being diagnosed with Alzheimer's in 2015, she walked and sang her way around Hackney and Islington parks, always looking forward to a celebratory chocolate ice-cream.

She is survived by me, our two children, and four grandchildren, Finn, Lizzy, Poppy and Felix.

Robert Tollemache

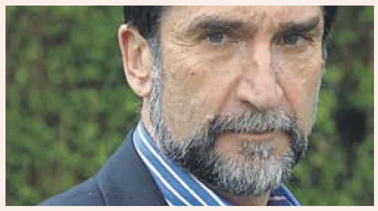
Alberic Fiennes

Surgeon who argued that severe obesity is a devastating disease that cannot be cured by "willpower"

My father, Alberic Fiennes, who has died aged 75, was a pioneering surgeon. He championed the idea that severe obesity - far from being a "moral failing" - is a physiological and psychological disease requiring medical intervention.

From 1990 to 2007 he was a consultant surgeon and lecturer at St George's hospital and medical school in Tooting, south London. He was committed to meticulous, patient-centric care and surgical innovation. An early convert to minimally invasive procedures that could reduce recovery time and pain, he was the first person in the UK to offer totally extraperitoneal (TEP) hernia repair as a day surgery.

Alberic ultimately specialised



in weight-loss surgery and in 2000 founded the present bariatric service at St George's hospital.

In this field he worked alongside his wife, Louise (nee Bidlake), a nurse. He regularly appeared on radio and television to argue that severe obesity is a devastating disease compounded by stigma, and that sufferers cannot be cured by simple "willpower". His innovative approach to treatment combined surgical intervention and continued psychological and dietetic assistance, which current research supports.

In 2007 Alberic set up the bariatric unit at University College hospital, London, remaining its director until 2009.

Born Alberic Twisleton-Wykeham-Fiennes in Bakewell, Derbyshire, he was the youngest of five children of Sir Maurice Fiennes, managing director of the Davy and United Engineering company, and Sylvia Finlay, the daughter of a British army officer. Alberic was educated at the Lyceum Alpinum Zuoz, in Switzerland, where he learned to speak Swiss German, German, French, Italian and Romansh. He also became an expert skier.

He started a degree in zoology at the University of Zurich before enrolling at St Bartholomew's hospital medical college in London. Alberic graduated in 1976, with first-class honours. During this time he also flew light aircraft with the RAF volunteer reserve. He passed the examinations for the Royal College of Surgeons in 1978, winning the Hallett prize as the highest scoring candidate in the country.

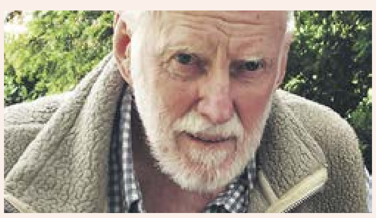
As a lead surgeon during the 1988 Clapham Junction rail crash, he recognised the need for improved training in trauma care among surgeons in the UK and helped establish advanced trauma life support (ATLS) training for them.

Alberic was committed to the lifelong care of his patients, who valued his clarity and empathy. His colleagues described him as extremely trustworthy; sensitive to the needs of others; quick to provide help where needed; and an outstanding teacher.

He was a brilliant wordsmith, artist and craftsman. He supported the charity Freedom from Torture from 1996 until his death.

Alberic is survived by Louise, whom he married in 1985, his daughters, Emily and me, his grandson, William, and his sisters, Elizabeth, Maria and Henrietta.

Alice Fiennes



Peter Day

Designer and builder of models, props and pyrotechnics for a host of BBC TV shows including Doctor Who

My father, Peter Day, who has died aged 95, worked as a senior designer in the visual effects department of the BBC for nearly 30 years, creating an enormous range of material for many familiar television programmes.

His career at the BBC involved the design and construction of models, machines, trick scenery, props and pyrotechnics for programmes such as Doctor Who, Blue Peter, It's a Square World, Horizon, Arena, Shackleton, Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em, The Goodies and Dad's Army. He was also responsible for conceiving the original design and construction of Davros, creator of the Daleks. Family and friends still delight in cheering his name when it appears on the closing credits of the reruns of series from time to time.

Born in Richmond, Surrey (now a greater London borough), the youngest of three children of Mabel (nee King) and Thomas Day, the registrar of Richmond, Peter attended nearby Kingston grammar school before volunteering as a driver in the Royal Army Service Corps. After demobilisation in 1948 he attended art schools in Kingston, where he studied interior and furniture design, and Wimbledon - theatre design and millinery.

Before joining the BBC in 1958 as a founding member of the newly created visual aids department (subsequently renamed visual effects), Peter enjoyed a variety of occupations, including tree surgeon, sales assistant at Bentalls,



Peter Day on the set of Doctor Who with a Sea Devil in the early 1970s

a department store in Kingston, window dresser, animator, milliner with the D'Oyly Carte opera company and scenery painter and changer at the Arts theatre, Soho, where he helped the director Peter Hall and Samuel Beckett with the London premiere of Waiting for Godot. My father had a reputation for being extremely practical with his hands, as well as having a good eye for form and design; attributes that served him well, not only at work but also in home life.

He introduced his children and grandchildren to the delights of camping, made costumes for many fancy-dress parties, rebuilt the still roadworthy family Austin 7 and made river trips on the Thames in the Pilchard, a reconditioned slipper launch. He was also musical, playing double bass, bongos and washboard in a jazz band made up of art school friends.

In 1952 Peter met Elizabeth Wallis at a Saturday coffee morning at Hogarth House, Richmond, the former home of Leonard and Virginia Woolf, and they married two years later. She survives him, as do my brother, Rupert, and me, and five grandchildren, Phoebe, Rufus, Henry, Lola and Daisy.

Justin Day

Birthdays

The Right Rev John Perumbalath, bishop of Liverpool, 57; **Richard Ayoade**, comedian, actor and writer, 46; **Johnny Ball**, television presenter, 85; **Rubens Barrichello**, racing driver, 51; **Prof Alan Bowman**, historian and former principal, Brasenose College, Oxford, 79; **Craig Brown**, satirist and author, 66; **Juliet Campbell**, diplomat, 88; **Dame Joan Collins**, actor and writer, 90; **Ryan Coogler**, screenwriter and film director, 37; **Dan Evans**, tennis player, 33; **Graeme Hick**, cricketer, 57; **Richard Hill**, rugby player, 50; **Jewel**, singer, 49; **Anatoly Karpov**, chess grandmaster and politician, 72; **Lady Olga Maitland**, former Conservative MP, 79; **Bob Mortimer**, comedian and actor, 64; **John Newcombe**, tennis player, 79; **George Osborne**, former editor, Evening Standard, former Conservative MP and chancellor of the exchequer, 52; **Martin Parr**, documentary photographer, 71; **Heidi Range**, singer, 40; **Michel Roux Jr**, chef, 63; **Phil Selway**, drummer and songwriter, 56; **Dame Janet Thornton**, molecular biologist, 74; **Matt Wrack**, general secretary, Fire Brigades Union, 61.

Letter
Elain Harwood

Through her contribution to the Post-War Listing Steering Group, Elain Harwood (obituary, 13 May) ensured the preservation of 20th-century buildings that could well have been lost or compromised, including the Festival Hall in London and the Byker estate in Newcastle.

At the same time, and behind the scenes, she worked tirelessly to secure the survival of much else besides, including the original campus at the University of York, designed by RMJM (Robert Matthew Johnson Marshall) in 1963-64. Harwood, who oversaw the listing of the buildings at York, in 2018, was someone who made the difference.

Anthony Geraghty

Announcements

The following announcement had been scheduled to appear on 22 May 2023, but due to a technical error the Announcements column did not appear in yesterday's newspaper.

In Memoriam

JONES, Timothy Benedict Robertshaw, 22/5/1983 - 22/4/2021. Tragically taken by bowel cancer. Deeply missed every day, and thinking of you on what would have been your 40th birthday. With all our love, Mum, Dad and your wonderful wife Lucy.

For Announcements, Acknowledgments, Adoptions, Anniversaries, Birthdays, Births, Deaths, Engagements, Memorial Services and In Memoriam, email us at announcements@theguardian.com including your name, address and telephone number or phone 0203 353 2114.

Puzzles

Yesterday's solutions

Killer sudoku

Easy

7	2	8	1	6	9	3	4	5
4	9	1	5	3	7	2	8	6
6	5	3	8	2	4	7	1	9
1	4	7	3	5	6	8	9	2
9	8	5	7	4	2	6	3	1
2	3	6	9	8	1	4	5	7
3	1	9	6	7	8	5	2	4
8	7	4	2	9	5	1	6	3
5	6	2	4	1	3	9	7	8

Medium

5	4	2	3	8	7	1	6	9
1	9	8	5	6	2	3	4	7
3	7	6	4	9	1	5	8	2
2	6	7	1	5	8	9	3	4
8	1	3	2	4	9	7	5	6
4	5	9	7	3	6	2	1	8
7	3	5	8	2	4	6	9	1
9	2	4	6	1	5	8	7	3
6	8	1	9	7	3	4	2	5

Codeword

B	L	A	N	K	■	F	O	R	W	A	R	D
A	■	I	■	I	■	U	■	E	■	L	■	A
T	H	R	O	N	G	S	■	W	A	L	T	Z
H	■	■	■	G	■	S	■	O	■	■	■	Z
E	X	C	E	P	T	■	B	R	I	D	A	L
S	■	O	■	I	■	A	■	K	■	I	■	I
■	S	W	I	N	I	S	H	■	G	O	O	N
E	■	B	■	■	■	T	■	■	■	X	■	G
V	I	O	L	■	C	I	R	C	U	I	T	■
E	■	Y	■	N	■	R	■	O	■	D	■	J
N	E	S	T	E	D	■	I	M	P	E	D	E
T	■	■	■	P	■	A	■	P	■	■	■	R
E	P	O	C	H	■	S	Q	U	A	L	L	S
R	■	U	■	E	■	P	■	T	■	Y	■	E
S	P	R	A	W	L	S	■	E	V	E	R	Y

Cryptic crossword

Solution No. 29,076

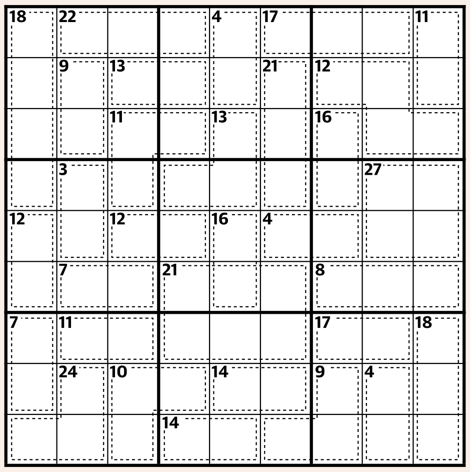
T	H	A	M	E	S	■	H	O	S	T	E	L	R	Y
■	A	■	O	■	H	■	U	■	Y	■	L	■	E	■
S	T	U	R	G	E	O	N	■	C	U	T	O	F	F
■	E	■	S	■	R	■	D	■	A	■	O	■	R	■
■	■	■	E	X	P	E	R	I	M	E	N	T	A	L
■	P	■	C	■	A	■	E	■	O	■	■	■	C	■
H	O	B	O	■	■	■	D	E	R	O	G	A	T	E
■	N	■	D	■	C	■	Y	■	E	■	R	■	O	■
S	T	E	E	R	A	G	E	■	■	■	A	I	R	Y
■	I	■	■	■	S	■	A	■	H	■	N	■	Y	■
O	F	F	T	H	E	G	R	O	U	N	D	■	■	■
■	I	■	W	■	M	■	S	■	B	■	S	■	S	■
S	C	R	A	P	E	■	W	O	R	K	L	O	A	D
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S	L	I	G	H	T	E	R	■	S	I	M	I	L	E

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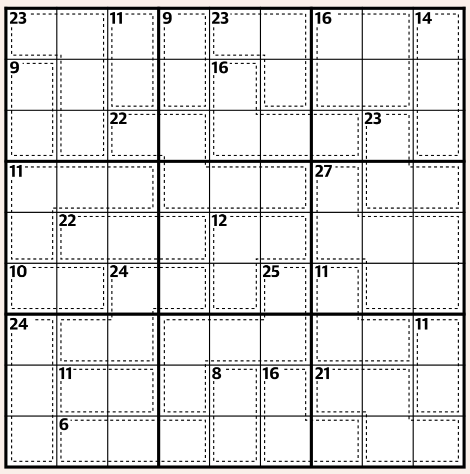
Killer sudoku

Easy

The normal rules of sudoku apply: fill each row, column and 3x3 box with all the numbers from 1 to 9. In addition, the digits in each inner shape (marked by dots) must add up to the number in the top corner of that box. No digit can be repeated within an inner shape.



Medium



Codeword

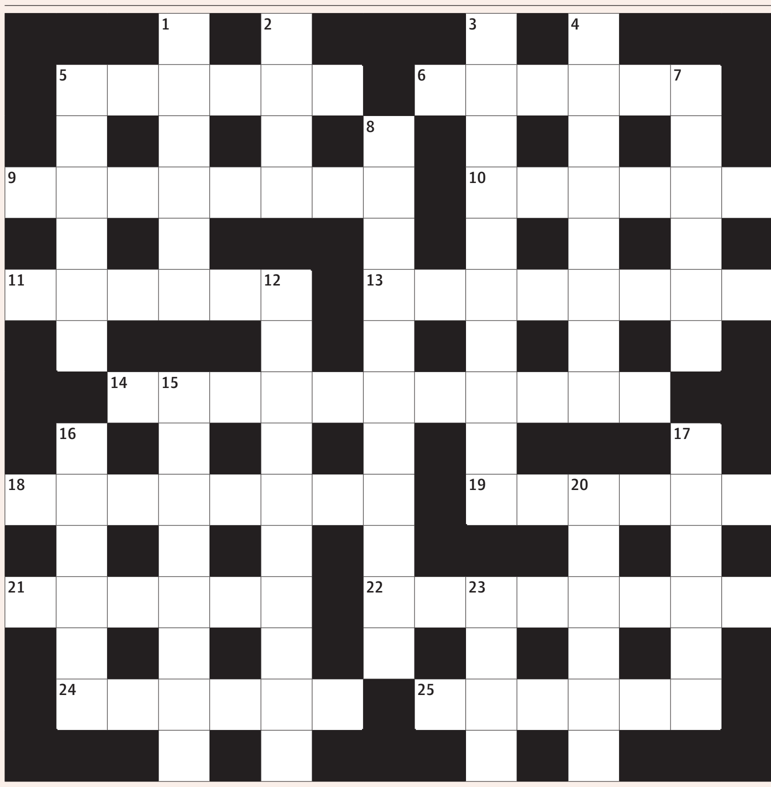
Each letter of the alphabet makes at least one appearance in the grid, and is represented by the same number wherever it appears. The letters decoded should help you to identify other letters and words in the grid.

20	■	14	■	14	■	18	■	4	■	17	■	18
6	21	20	14	15	■	20	22	26	12	21	24 U	14
19	■	13	■	12	■	14	■	12	■	16	■	23
12	13	18	20	11	15	14	■	15	21	22	12	6
4	■	7	■	■	■	20	■	■	■	2	■	19
10	12	4	16	12	22	9	■	6	19	20	14	4
4	■	■	■	22	■	4	■	21	■	7	■	■
11	21	16	12	22	9	■	4	23	4	7	12	17
■	■	20	■	4	■	20	■	18	■	■	■	20
14	21	7	20	11	■	17	11	24	22	25	4	22
3	■	15	■	■	■	10	■	■	■	12	■	17 D
24	22	8	12	18	■	4	5	4	6	15	21	11
20	■	4	■	21	■	11	■	20	■	15	■	24
1	21	11	8	21	12	14	■	14	19	4	7	2
14	■	14	■	7	■	4	■	15	■	17	■	2

A B C ~~D~~ E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T ~~U~~ V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 D	18	19	20	21	22	23	24 U	25	26

Guardian cryptic crossword No 29,077 set by Fed



Across

5 Colour once the line's blue (6)
6 Grown-up weed over tent (3,3)
9 Son left boring low buzzer – it's annoying (8)
10 Affected American grounds for education (6)
11 Leader of air force travelling to this address (4,2)
13 Getting souvenir from Gatwick's terminal: go back with Japanese drink (8)
14,8 Duke only bet big on poker when working with electronic system for recording deals (6-5,11)
18 Quickly prepare comic set with RuPaul trashing America (6,2)
19 Retrospectively consider casting couches untouchable (6)
21 Shy away from angry crocodile wanting fish (6)
22 A lot of our menus circulated (8)
24 Partner's steep parking charges (6)
25 Space on school English programme (6)

Down

1 Hint about returning TV panel show's set (6)
2 Bread releasing a single recorded as DIY music? (2-2)
3 Mike casting actress in The Krays, say (10)
4 Mister Scrooge partook occasionally at first (8)
5 Belly dance finally seen by Arab country's royal bodyguard (6)
7 Brave to pick unknown (6)
8 See 14
12 Material lie about modern American composer (10)
15 Conservative party pursuing alternative to holding hard vote (8)
16 Pressure of rubber company making ten hollow samples (6)
17 Iconic Australian posh girl raised pulse (6)
20 My class stays (6)
23 Club's highest point when midfielder initially moves up top (4)

G2



"A 17-year-old versus a grizzly? I was about to die!

How Alex Messenger survived a bear attack

The Guardian

Tuesday 23/05/23

Life & Arts



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Zoe Williams



Speed courses are dire – but not in the way Braverman thinks

My Mr and I waste a lot of argument capital circling around the probable consequences of politicians' misdemeanours. He thinks we're in last-days-of-Rome territory, and all it will take is a revelation that Grant Shapps yelled at a waiter and the whole thing will come down like a Jenga tower. I, conversely, think the last days of Rome went on for a long time and, in a post-Johnson world, the bar is so low for probity and whatnot that a minister would have to commit murder for the consequences to even ricochet into the next week.

So I don't think Suella Braverman has torched her own career if she did ask Whitehall officials to fix it for her to do a speed awareness course in private (although she says she did "nothing untoward"). But in the fanciful event that Mr Z is right and I am wrong, that Braverman's trivial but telling act dispatches her to the wilderness of her party, it will have been the dumbest imaginable thing to lose a portfolio over. She could have done that course in a room full of people and nobody would have recognised her – not because she hasn't made quite the name for herself with the frothing Nazi-lite crowdpleasers, but because the speed awareness course is a place of such pure alienation that nobody notices anyone.

I'm convinced that everyone with a driving licence has done one but nobody admits it because of the shame, though not of the speeding itself, which people find pretty easy to forgive themselves for. I have only ever met one person with active penitence for going too fast, and her too fast was 90mph down Kings Road in London. For anyone unfamiliar with the Al Stewart song, this is a shopping street dense with milling people. Even then, this driver's take-home was not "abide by the speed limit", it was "never have an argument with your boyfriend after five margaritas, and then get in a car".

> There's the rest of the day to fill, and all they have to say is: 'Slow down'

No, the course itself is crucifyingly shameful. It starts with a lecture about not looking at your phone, where you're carefully walked through the consequences of disobeying: your course will be annulled and you'll have to pay for another. This cycle – look at phone, get course voided, take another, look at phone – is potentially infinite. This explanation takes so long, and mentions the word "phone" so often, that all you want to do is get your phone out and play Stick Hero. Your phone becomes so magnetic that it feels like it's glowing and yet you can't touch it, an experience of impotence and submission that reorientates your sense of self from "person" to "worm". It's a lot like how I imagine a communist re-education camp.

Now 19 hours have passed, but in reality, only 19 minutes. There is the whole rest of the day to fill and all the instructors have got to say is: "Don't go so fast. Slow down." They solicit questions, but no one has any. "Nothing? Nobody wants to know anything?" the instructors plead, and even though all they are to you is a suit, standing between you and your phone, you do still feel for them on a human level. One woman on my course felt the awkwardness so keenly that she fished up, "What about skating on the 10%? Going 77 in a 70 – doesn't everyone do that?" "No," the gentleman said, stern but also palpably grateful.

They do have one interesting thing to say, which they save until the end of the day – and that is that however much you break the speed limit, you don't actually arrive much sooner. You could break the law 17 times on a 100-mile journey and still only shave four minutes off it.

Braverman, in other words, could camouflage effortlessly in this swamp of boredom and authoritarianism. She should have saved her sketchy use of civil servants for something more fun, like Wimbledon tickets.

The dos and don'ts of visiting new puppy owners

I always assumed that when a person gets a new dog, the household lives for a period in new-baby territory. That is to say, anyone is allowed to visit whenever they like as long as they bring something diverting and indulgent – a card trick, vodka – and don't expect so much as a glass of water. This turns out not to be true. I had to lobby for weeks to be invited to meet my friend's new dachshund and when we arrived, it turned out "lunch" meant actual lunch, which wasn't what I meant at all. I was thinking more, have some Frazzles, hug the dog, hug the older dog so it didn't feel left out, do that a few more times, then go for a walk.

The etiquette is the opposite of new-baby rules: you have to think of some things to talk about that aren't the dog. You shouldn't really make minute-by-minute observations about the activities of the dog, or speculate about its feelings. Its owners have already had these conversations; they were hoping you would arrive with something new.

If they do take you out for a walk, and you pass some other people on a beautiful early summer's day, and they stop to pet the new dog because, let's face it, *it's so small*, it's bad form to pretend the dog is yours by making proprietorial statements such as: "Yes, she does have a lovely nature, thank you for noticing", and: "Yes, this is her dad, but look how different they are in colouring." I don't know why it's so wrong, but it is, and I knew that when I was doing it.

If the dog is very small, being only three months old, and you are used to a larger-boned canine, take extra care not to tread on the dog. And know when to leave. It's easy with a baby: you leave when it starts crying. If you wait for a puppy to start getting on your nerves, you may as well move in.



Pass notes



№ 4,561

Bare feet

Age: The oldest shoes ever found are about 9,000 years old, so older than that. Bare feet have been around since there have been people with feet – or since Adam and Eve.

Why are we talking about them now? I thought these Pass Notes columns were about breaking news, not ancient history. Because they are back.

Pass Notes? No, that never went away … well, it did, but that's another story. Bare feet!

Where? In Los Angeles. Ergo, in fashion.

Says who? Fashion site the Cut. It has declared that "2023 will be Barefoot-Boy Summer™".

Bold statement. And does it have the evidence to back it up? Jacob Elordi was spotted on a coffee run "*sans chaussures*".

The very tall Australian actor? His feet are so far away he probably didn't even notice. And musician Mike Sabath was also seen shoeless.

Mike Sabath? Of Mike Sabath and the Moongirls.

Of course. Plus, when the Italian label Etro launched its spring 23 collection, it sent its male models down the runway *a piedi nudi*. And – spoiler alert! – in a recent episode of Succession, Lukas Matsson made the journey from his PJ to Shiv's PJ barefoot.

Surely no one wears shoes with PJs? In modern parlance, PJs refers not to nightwear but to how billionaires get about.

Private jets, got it. And if it's in Succession, it must be a thing. Is it just the men, though? No – as ever, women are leading the way. At Cannes this year, Cate Blanchett took to the stage wearing nothing on her feet, to show solidarity with women in Iran.

It is a Cannes thing, no? Yes. In 2018, Kristen Stewart kicked off her Christian Louboutins to climb the red-carpeted steps. As did Julia Roberts and Sasha Lane a couple of years before.

Also Zola Budd. Oh yes, the South African middle- and long-distance runner, in the 80s. Way ahead of the field. Or behind it.

How so? Obviously, no one wore shoes in the 60s either. And the Cut says Barefoot-Boy Summer™ aligns with the "bohemian-hippy vibe coursing through the culture".

Man. OK, I'm on board: lose the shoes. Just one problem. Yes?

It's all very well on Hollywood's polished sidewalks and the red carpets of Cannes, but around my way it is all broken glass and dog poo, and I don't want that between my toes. No, I can appreciate that. A pair of stilts then, perhaps? Which you can operate barefoot, though it might be a bit painful. On the flipside, you get to feel what it's like to be as tall as Elordi.

Do say: "Adios, Balenciaga! Boo-hoo Jimmy Choo!"

Don't say: "Eurgh, verruca!"

COVER: NATE RYAN/THE GUARDIAN. THIS PAGE: GETTY/ISTOCKPHOTO; LAURENCE MONNERET/GETTY

'Why should anyone be hungry?'

More than 13 million Britons do not have enough to eat. **Ellie Violet Bramley** meets the people trying to help with everything from community-run larders to free food stalls



'There needs to be dignity and respect' … Deepa Chauhan

'We've just had the king's coronation and people are still going hungry. What's that about?" Food charity founder Cocoa Fowler speaks with the passion of someone who daily bears witness to an increasing number of people struggling to feed themselves and their families.

Hunger is now widespread in the UK. Almost 10 million adults and 4 million children do not have enough to eat - nearly double what it was a year ago. More than 2 million adults cannot afford to eat every day. It has been called a "domestic humanitarian crisis". Which is why Fowler and others like him have felt compelled to set up local food banks and community larders.

'It's very humiliating for people - they've not asked for this to happen to them'

Deepa Chauhan, Burnt Oak community food bank

Deepa Chauhan's day job used to be in marketing and PR, but now staving off hunger for the residents of Burnt Oak, a suburb in north-west London, has become a full-time occupation.

She had been involved in feeding homeless people for 13 years, but when Covid hit, the food run came to a halt. She started filling her car boot with provisions instead - "chocolate bars, crisps, drinks, just non-perishable items" - and offering them to charities.

"There was a lot of deprivation in Burnt Oak, an area that's been overlooked for years and years," she says, describing it as "a very diverse area full of beautiful souls who are just misunderstood, overlooked and unheard".

She set up Burnt Oak community food bank (BOCFB) in March 2021, initially as an eight-week pilot scheme feeding approximately 25 people. "We delivered fresh produce, so it was yams, plantains, coriander - the type of things that our local, diverse community needs." It has been running ever since.

In the beginning, Chauhan paid out of her own pocket, with the help of a few donors: now they receive regular donations. "When we started it was £250 [a week], now it's off the radar." Their ethos, she says, is to serve "anyone and everyone coming through our doors".

At the moment, that looks like 150 people every fortnight - "they queue up from 11 in the morning, though we don't open the doors until 2pm". Then they go across to a local hotel that houses more than 700 people. "Their situation is very dire. They're refugees, asylum seekers. We also have homeless people, ex-convicts, people who've just been released from prison."

Reading some of the emails she receives asking for help, it is, she says, "hard to have a dry eye". What were all these people doing before BOCFB came along? "A lot of them were starving," she says.

"We need to restructure the whole way we deal with this crisis of food shortages and food poverty," she says. "It's very humiliating for people to reach out and ask for help … There needs to be empathy, there needs to be dignity, there needs to be respect in understanding that the clients walking through their doors, they've not asked for these situations to happen to them."

She thinks the government should give more support to grassroots initiatives like BOCFB.

"We make sure that we are able to sleep at night knowing that people who've come in, they've got provisions." If it is a pork pie Chauhan's clients need, "because they've got arthritis and can't utilise their cooking facilities properly", it is a pork pie they shall get. "We know, hand on heart, that our community is being taken care of, and that's really important."

'It started with the homeless, then people in need, now it's everybody'

Cocoa Fowler, Food for Nought

The story of how Cocoa Fowler founded Food for Nought is not one he likes telling: "It comes out of hunger." Brought up in care, he served 15 years in the British armed forces - in Iraq, Germany and Afghanistan - before coming back to the UK. "Nothing was going well for me," he says, and he found himself homeless.

He was, he says, fortunate that a charity turned round to him and



said, “‘You don’t need to have this stigma hanging over you. You’re a driver, why don’t you drive one of our vehicles?’” He started driving to pick up surplus food but “realised there was more food that needed picking up than we were able to”. This was when he had the idea of Food for Nought, the charity he now runs, picking up surplus produce from supermarkets and local farms and redistributing it to charities.

Its 12 volunteers deliver food from farms and supermarkets to 15 community fridges and food banks in the charity’s three vans, providing for upwards of 1,500 people a week in the Peterborough and Huntingdonshire area.

The problem, he says, is not a lack of supplies – “the food will never run out”. But “we need more organisations and centres that can turn this into meals – maybe then we would be able to say there’s not one child in this school that hasn’t got a meal, there’s not one person in a household that’s struggling that hasn’t got a meal, because we can provide that.”

This is a sore spot for him: he has a “beautiful centre that needs maybe half a million quid to get it up and running, but it’s been sat there” because the funding isn’t available. “We feed 1,500 a week now; we could be feeding triple that. We have offers of volunteers. Even my landlady, who is a qualified baker and teacher, has said, ‘If we can get this built, I can teach baking courses.’”

The levels of hunger he is currently seeing are unprecedented. “This is the madness about it … I have an awful lot of friends who work in businesses or organisations like the NHS, the trains, middle-level workers, and they’re struggling to pay their bills and they need feeding.” The need has grown, and is continuing to grow. “It started with the homeless, then went to people in need, then went to lower levels, now it’s actually, I’d say, everybody.”

Fowler has ample and personal reason to feel passionate – he himself would still be going hungry if it weren’t for the excess food he accesses via his own charity. “I don’t think I’d be able to survive on the benefits I get if it wasn’t for charities like myself,” he says.

‘We’ve never, ever called it a food bank; we call it a free food stall’

Katie Barry, St George’s Church of England primary school, Lincolnshire

The day that Boris Johnson first announced he was closing schools because of Covid, headteacher Katie Barry’s first thought was not about her pupils’ education but about what they were going to eat. Her school sits in “a real pocket of exceptionally high deprivation”. Nearly 80% of pupils are entitled to free school meals; the national average for primary level is 25%.

She has been head of this school for 17 years, and already knew there were a lot of hungry children there. “We’ve always done things to help,” she says, but Covid meant there was “less pressure for a little while on teaching … That gave us the green light to really concentrate on what our families needed.”

What they needed was food. “We were properly closed for one day, and on the second day we started providing lunches for families through the school gates.” At first it was just jacket potatoes. “Then local shops and people heard what we were doing and donated some food,” which they served along with school meals. “Then it just grew and grew.” Soon, Barry was effectively running a food bank out of the school.



Cocoa Fowler, founder of Food for Nought


Eglinton community larder, run by Debbie Caulfield

They partnered with FareShare, the charity for which Marcus Rashford is an ambassador, which would deliver about 700-800kg of food a week. “We started doing that and we’ve just never been able to stop it,” she says.

While the pandemic might be over, deprivation has got worse. “We always had some food poverty but now it’s not just that lowest, neediest layer; there’s more children, there’s children whose parents do work.” Barry says that even members of her staff have been forced to use the service.

It is particularly because of families who are new to hunger that Barry has been careful how she has gone about things. For example, she has “never ever called it a food bank. We call it a free food stall, and I would hazard a guess that quite a few of the parents, if you asked them ‘Do you use a food bank?’ they would say ‘No’.”

Barry thinks budgeting should be put on school curriculums. And how to cook the basics. At her school, they are teaching the children these skills, plus they have an allotment where they grow food.

They are also teaching parents. “We try to have a more all-inclusive approach to it – so don’t just take the packet, take some of these potatoes and carrots and cabbages and look what you can turn them into.” While fresh fruit has always been popular, vegetables would often be left behind. But she says this without judgment: “You’ve got to understand the background … And you can’t put your own values on to somebody else’s life.”

‘My constant phrase is, “It’ll only go to waste …”’

Debbie Caulfield, Eglinton community larder

Debbie Caulfield describes Eglinton, where she lives and works, managing the community centre, as a relatively affluent village. “If you looked us up in the statistical records, we wouldn’t be an area of multiple deprivation,” she says, but there are people who previously had “money to feed their families and meet their housing needs and everything else”, and because of hikes in prices can no longer afford to do so.

In her village of about 4,000 people, just outside Derry, the larder is regularly used by a couple of dozen people a week, plus others more occasionally. “It’s mainly things like bread, baking products,” she says. Plus: “There’s someone local who produces a lot of eggs on their farm that are too small for sale, so on a regular basis he donates all those small eggs. Trays and trays full.”

The amount taken has been unexpected. “When some of the local schools have done a collection and every shelf of the larder has been full, and the next day everything has been taken away, that has surprised me.”

Caulfield says that part of the problem is accessing fresh food: “If you are in a rural community, then the cost of transport going to some of the larger supermarkets” is part of the equation for people.

She is thinking more broadly about strengthening food security in her village, and has also been involved in planting a community orchard of plum, pear and apple trees on a piece of council land “so people can access fresh fruit and vegetables, grow some of their own and share that produce between each other, because poverty and food hunger do have a stigma attached to them.”

The larder was in part a response to “the realisation in the middle of all that [panic] buying that there was a lot of food waste at the time as well … yet people need this food and how can we distribute it in a relatively straightforward way?” Continuing to market the larder as an answer to food waste has, she thinks, helped to soften the stigma of taking from it. “My constant phrase is, ‘It’ll only go to waste.’ The whole point about it is not to make people feel as if they’re in need. I’d rather people feel as if they’re doing us a favour by taking the stuff.”

That anything should go to waste when others are hungry is, she says, “such a shame and I suppose that’s what drives me, thinking why should anyone be sitting hungry when there’s food there that can be given away? Doesn’t make any sense at all.”



Katie Barry of St George’s primary school

PHOTOGRAPHS: ANSELM EBULUE/THE GUARDIAN



'I've never seen anything move as fast as that bear'

It's almost 20 years since Alex Messenger was mauled by a grizzly while canoeing through the Canadian wilderness. He tells **Elle Hunt** about his trauma - and recovery

Late one afternoon, on what was supposed to be a six-week white-water canoe trip through the Canadian wilderness, 17-year-old Alex Messenger left his campsite to climb a steep ridge that promised panoramic views of the tundra. It was the highest point for at least 50 miles. "You could see lake after lake, after lake," he says. Then, directly across the ridge, Messenger saw something else - a flicker of brown. His body recognised it before his conscious mind did. "It triggered all of the physiological responses in a fraction of a second," he says, "before I even realised it was a grizzly bear."

Four weeks earlier, in July 2005, Messenger's group of six had set out on their summer adventure from Lake Wholdaia, in the remote Canadian Northwest Territories. They'd been told they'd be lucky to see a bear. "I felt like I had a good appreciation of what risks we were likely to encounter," Messenger says. "Top of my mind was flipping the boat."

Finding himself face to face with a 600lb grizzly bear had not crossed his mind. Now, with the predator just 30ft away, Messenger felt his airways enlarge, his adrenaline spike and his pulse double, preparing his body to flee, fight or hide. The bear seemed to be making a similar assessment. It was on all fours, wide-eyed and clearly startled. "It was like we'd stumbled upon each other, and both had the reaction: 'What am I looking at?'" says Messenger.

He wanted to run. Instead, he says, "I fell back on my training." He started slowly backing away, speaking in a low voice, keeping his eyes averted, trying desperately to persuade the bear that he was not to be feared. But the bear wasn't convinced. Grunting and growling, it launched towards Messenger, one or two steps at a time, as if it was testing him.

The distance between them was shrinking rapidly, even as Messenger was edging away. "I knew that I couldn't run - but I wasn't really sure what to do at that point," he says (the bear deterrents the group had packed were back at the campsite). Then the bear charged. Despite their immense bulk, bears can run at close to 40mph. When it was 15ft away, Messenger could feel the ground shaking under its paws.

He yelled for help, knowing no one could hear him. Then, instinctively, he threw his 15lb camera case at the animal galloping towards him - and hit it square on its snout. The strike was forceful enough to turn the bear's head, allowing Messenger to jump out of its path. But, "As soon as it realised it had missed me, it turned around and came at me again." Even in the moment, he remembers being struck by its agility. "I've never seen anything move as quickly as that bear." The other thing that registered was the smell - "like a dog that had never been bathed".

For excruciating seconds, bear and boy circled each other, "bullfighting style", says Messenger - but with each round, the circle grew tighter. The bear was snapping and swiping at Messenger, who took a glancing blow to the shoulder, then another across his back. But, just as he had dodged its jaws, the bear reached up with its forepaws. The blow across Messenger's face could have felled a caribou or musk ox, the bear's typical prey. "I felt like a mosquito getting swatted," he says. "My head went to the side, then I went flying."

Mid-air, he realised there was no way that he could outsmart



'I kept waiting for the bear to come back and finish the job' … Messenger today

PHOTOGRAPHS: NATE RYAN/THE GUARDIAN; ALEX MESSENGER



> **The whole episode took 30-60 seconds, but it sent ripples through the rest of my life**

or outmanoeuvre his opponent. "There was nothing physically that I could do: you've got a 150lb 17-year-old versus a 600lb grizzly bear," he says. "I just realised that, you know … I was about to die." He pauses. "And it was a terrible feeling."

As soon as Messenger landed, hard, on his tailbone, the bear was upon him. Its head was right above his hip joint, its jaws around his leg. "I felt those teeth go in on both sides, and blacked out from the pain," he says. He doesn't know how long he was unconscious: "I was playing dead very effectively."

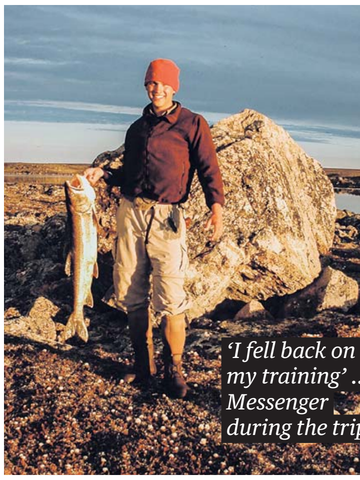
When he came to, the bear was loping quickly in the other direction. Having eliminated the threat, it seemingly wanted to make a quick getaway. Still playing dead, Messenger watched it disappear over the edge of the rise, then took his chance. He set out in what he hoped was the direction of the camp, his surging adrenaline just about overpowering the growing heat of his right thigh. "The whole time I was waiting for the bear to come back and finish the job," he says.

He staggered 150 yards or so to the lip of the ridge, his right leg now screaming, his trouser leg sticky with blood, and yelled down to the campsite: "Bear!" Below, his friends reacted with disbelief. They were in a communal tent, making pizzas.

Messenger had been unlucky to run into the bear and even less lucky to be attacked by it. Just 44 attacks by grizzly bears are reported globally each year, with 12 of them taking place in North America. Most are nonfatal.

Messenger estimates now, on a video call from his home in Duluth, Minnesota, that the time between stumbling across the bear and losing consciousness was 30-60 seconds. "It was super-short, but it had ripple effects through the rest of my life," he says. Lying there, powerful images of loved ones flashed through his mind in quick succession.

The group's 27-year-old guide, Dan, had some emergency responder training and he carried out an initial assessment. Messenger's right leg had been in the bear's jaws, causing a deep puncture to his thigh and four more compression wounds elsewhere. He had claw marks across his back, around one ankle and to an earlobe, and the beginnings of a black eye where the bear had struck him. At some point, the tips of two of his toes had been sliced clean off: he has no recollection of how that happened.



'I fell back on my training' … Messenger during the trip

The group was more than 100 miles from the closest settlement - but, after their base camp was consulted via satellite phone, an emergency evacuation by plane was deemed too logistically challenging. While Messenger could not walk, he could paddle, so the group resolved to continue along the route towards what had been their intended destination, the tiny settlement of Baker Lake in the Arctic territory of Nunavut, remaining in close contact with experts by phone and monitoring Messenger day and night for signs of infection.

Damage to Messenger's muscle tissue had slowed the flow of blood to his wounds and Dan was tasked with regularly reopening his wounds and flushing them by syringe. Messenger recalls the excruciating pain, and biting down on his leather-covered multitool to cope. The group's stores of ibuprofen had to be carefully rationed, but for Messenger there was some comfort in putting his fate in the hands of his teammates. "It can be hard to let go, but I think it's a really important step … It helps to bring some peace and remove stress."

With Messenger only able to paddle with reduced mobility, and sometimes having to encounter white water, the group made slow and often painful progress. But, he says, being able to contribute was a "really good feeling". "That I was able to assist in my own rescue was empowering and cathartic for me … I had this mindset of 'OK, what do we have to do next?'"

As long as Messenger remained stable, the priority was getting him a rabies shot within 12 days of the attack. But, after a gruelling five-day passage, his wounds started showing signs of infection. Dan improvised his first-ever surgery, cutting out the dying tissue - "like trying to cut through the tough parts of raw chicken", says Messenger.

Nevertheless, the infection continued to spread. Now that they were closer to the settlement at Baker Lake and helicopters were available, the call was made to evacuate the patient. It was decided that one of the teammates, Mike, would accompany Messenger on his journey, because it was thought that he was less likely to develop post-traumatic stress disorder if he stayed with someone he knew. Ironically, Messenger recalls, Mike was the one who had persuaded him to come on the trip, when he had been wavering over the cost. "I'm still thankful that he did," he says. "Really - it was just such an amazing experience, even if it didn't quite go as we planned."

At Baker Lake, Messenger received 12 hours of intravenous antibiotics, before being flown south to Winnipeg for the first of five rabies shots. His parents drove through the night from the family home in Minnesota to pick him up. For six weeks, he took oral antibiotics and followed a programme of wound care management. Two months after the attack, the puncture on his right thigh had healed. He regained full motion a year later through personal training. "I was incredibly lucky," he says. "To see me, no one would have any idea what had happened."

That has proved its own burden. There is no support group for survivors of bear attacks, because, as Messenger says, there aren't enough of them. "I recognised early on that it would be hard to find people who would relate." Even before they were evacuated, Messenger had told Mike that he almost wished for claw marks on his arm, some sign of what he'd been through. "It's like this impostor syndrome: people are going to think that I'm making it up." When most people hear about Messenger's story, he says, their first reaction is to look him up and down.

The toll proved to be mostly psychological. For the first few weeks after the attack, Messenger had flashbacks and would wake up in the night, convinced a bear was right next to him. Even almost 20 years later, Messenger, who is now 35, remains easily startled. When he is out hiking, and a twig snaps, "I instantly go into a full-blown fight-or-flight response." Dogs in particular can be triggering. But, through meditation and breathwork, he has been able to gain greater control over those bodily responses.

Learning about bears and why they attack also helped him to process the trauma. "When you have a trauma, regardless of what it is, if you're able to understand it, that can be a big step towards healing," he says. "It's taking this thing that your brain can't figure out and compartmentalising it, so that it's not just going to jump out at you." Messenger also drew comfort from researching what he could have done differently, in case he should ever be unlucky enough to stumble across a bear again. "It's things as simple as not going out alone, and making a noise when you're coming up to a blind spot, that are going to dramatically decrease the chances of this happening again."

A few years ago, he returned to grizzly country, visiting the Glacier national park in Montana with friends. They carried bear spray - "religiously", he says.

Today, Messenger talks knowledgably about bear behaviour in a way that belies his first-hand experience. His only response while watching Leonardo DiCaprio's character get mauled by a bear in the 2015 film The Revenant was to think: "That bear is not moving like my bear did." Messenger's was a "classic defensive encounter," he says, meaning that the bear was motivated only by the desire to eliminate threat, not by the need for food - which, he says, would be what is known as a "predacious encounter - and a whole other level of horrifying".

But, although Messenger might have mastered intellectually what happened to him, for some years he struggled to find the meaning of it. "I've always felt that there's perhaps some kind of purpose tied around this whole experience. I don't know what that is, but it feels like there was a little bit more at play than what we can see and touch." For years, "I was waiting for an "Aha!" moment that would tie it all up for me," he says. "That never happened."

Eventually, he joined his local volunteer wilderness search-and-rescue team, using his experience to help others. Writing a book about his experience was also therapeutic: "I realised I could spend my entire life waiting to find out what the purpose was - it was time to tell the story. I didn't need to tell people what it meant: they could take their own meaning from it."

In his day-by-day account of the journey, Messenger carries the reader along with him to replicate a singular experience that can transform a life. "Everything changes once you get there - and everything changes once you leave."

The Twenty-Ninth Day: Surviving a Grizzly Attack in the Canadian Tundra by Alex Messenger is out now



'It was time to tell the story' … Messenger (left) with his team



A people's mythology ... an image from Acts of Appearance

'Rural life is being written out'

From cobra-headed deities to the farmers who invaded Delhi, Gauri Gill captures a side of India rarely seen. **Dale Berning Sawa** meets the uncompromising photographer



Unable to look away ... Gill

Gauri Gill started out in her 20s, a Delhi-based photojournalist covering stories right across India. She'd drop in, drop back out, then later find herself wondering what had happened to all the people she had photographed. "In India, as across the world," says Gill, "the rural is being written out. The city - and AI is an extreme extension of the city - leads us to think we can do everything through machines. But the actual people on the ground - the farmers, the Adivasis [the term given to India's indigenous peoples], the forest-dwellers, who have lived so beautifully and so sustainably on the earth and from whom we should be learning - are being crushed."

In 1999, Gill saw a young girl being beaten by her teacher at a school near Jodhpur and decided this was something she needed to spend longer on. She pitched a story on village schools. When no commission came, Gill quit her job at a magazine and made her way back to the farthest reaches of Rajasthan, to the Thar desert. She wanted to record what life there was like, especially for women and girls. She could not look away.

This marked the beginning of a photographic archive, now in its third decade, that Gill calls Notes from the Desert. For a long time, she showed the photographs only to the people in them, now her friends. She worried about "people with power going in and representing people without power". But one day, she spoke to a great activist who had long worked in these areas. He said: "Don't you think rich people have hearts?" Taking her work only to the relevant villages, he added, could not be as impactful as taking it farther afield, to Delhi and Mumbai, say. After all, the villagers already knew their stories.

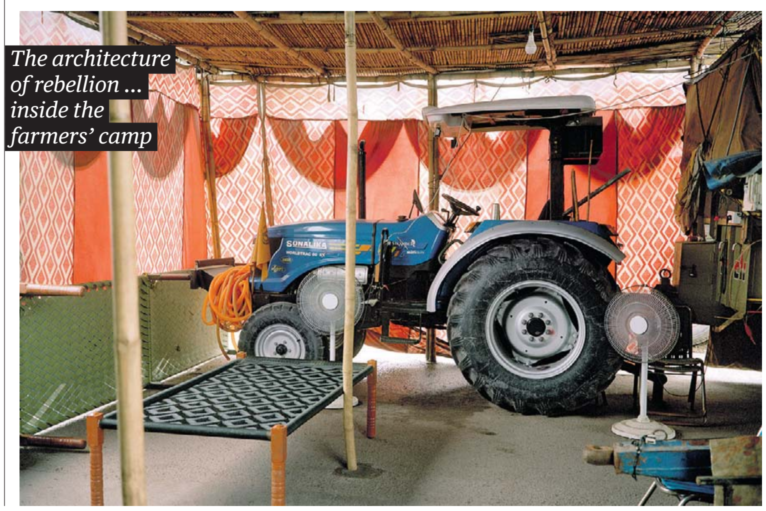
In 2020, again, Gill could not look away when farmers from Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and beyond - fearing the government's agricultural reforms would further imperil their already fragile livelihoods by giving greater power to global corporations - travelled in convoys of tractors and trucks to protest in Delhi. They drove up to the police barricades on the roads leading into the capital and made camp. Did Gill grab her camera?

Actually, Gill's archive does not document the year-long protest that followed. There were activists living there throughout, she says, who were doing an amazing job of getting the message out. Instead, she first visited in January, two months in, merely to show her support. It was freezing cold. There were neither proper toilets nor running water. Why is it, she wondered, that the voices of the people who are actually growing our food are not heard? So Gill chose to document the village the farmers built, especially the way they adapted their farm vehicles to make them habitable during extreme weather.

> **"Why is it that the voices of the people who actually grow our country's food are not heard?**

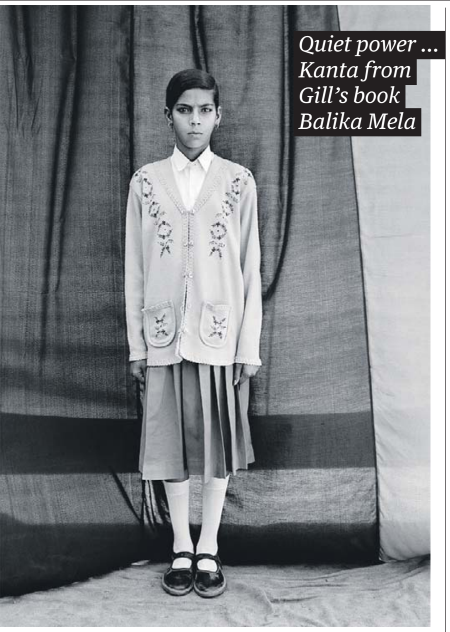
This series is called The Village on the Highway and it is one of the many pictorial treasures heralding the completion of the new Photography Centre at the V&A in London, which opens to the public on Thursday. Spread across seven galleries, the centre chronicles photography from its very beginnings to the present day, aiming to "explore its extensive impact on our lives".

Gill works with a big film camera. It is a slow, almost painterly medium that lends itself to capturing margins and details, things quiet and overlooked. The farmers had brought flags, produce, patience and the sort of resolve that comes from a lifetime of working fields. They had also brought their own knowledge systems and skills - including the make-do ethos called *jugaad*. They stretched out tarpaulin and trussed it up to metal, taped mesh to door frames



The architecture of rebellion ... inside the farmers' camp

PHOTOGRAPHS: GAURI GILL; JAMES COHAN, NEW YORK



Quiet power ... Kanta from Gill's book Balika Mela

and erected tents and bamboo scaffolding, to carve out spaces to eat and rest in. For all their endeavours, though, the people are absent from these shots, which just feature what Gill calls these "speaking structures".

The villagers also set up kitchens boasting brick-cased fires and cooking pots the size of bathtubs, from which they fed not just each other but also the people - some of the city's poorest - already living where they now camped. Gill photographed cauliflower plants one farmer had planted in the roadside dirt. Twelve months later, as the laws were finally repealed and the farmers started packing up to go home, Gill watched a local woman cry. She had come to the site to be fed every day.

"In the face of extreme hard-heartedness, the farmers were saying, 'Here we will give you food. We will be generous.' That spirit is what moved me. When you were there with them, you didn't feel like leaving. Even at the very low points, people would say, 'It's OK, we will win, we will just keep sitting here.' It was so optimistic." Many of the farmers were elderly men; some estimates put the number of those who died at 750. "One man said to me, 'If you want to see Guru Nanak [the 15th-century founder of Sikhism] come and see the old men over here.' It would break my heart because they were giving themselves fighting for everybody. Their survival is key to all of us."

Scroll through The Village on the Highway section of Gill's archive and it's the details that capture the eye: Buddhist prayer flags, red Communist flags, the Indian national flag, Sikh religious flags, farmers' association flags. Then there are the garlands of plastic flowers, the rusting corrugated iron sheets jostling with unhitched trailers and large water tanks. Straw is stuffed beneath tarpaulin-covered roofs, for extra insulation against cold air and monsoon rains. Shoes, flicked off tired feet, mark the entrance to a living space decorated with muddy rugs. Gill calls the site "an architecture of resistance and tremendous beauty, because you see how it comes from urgent necessity".

This combination of resistance and beauty can be found in another ongoing series, Traces. Begun in 1999, it records the graves created in the Thar desert by Muslims, Hindus, nomadic Jogis and Bishnoi alike. To an outsider, these slight mounds, subtly signalled by a grouping of stones or crockery shards, might appear merely incidental to the rocky terrain. But the people who live there know - and, crucially, Gill knows the people.

When Gill talks about her projects, she says "we". So does she work with a big team? "No," she replies. "I'm alone, pretty much." In Delhi, she has a studio manager to help with admin, but when she's working elsewhere, it's just her and her camera and the people she's visiting. She speaks with them in Hindi, Punjabi, English and Hindustani. Mostly, she tries to get out of the way and listen.

People might ask her to go to the police station with them when they're in trouble, or accompany them to the hospital if doctors aren't taking them seriously. As an English-speaker, says the photographer, she has a power people can tap into. "The world of English," she says, "is the world that is seen to be the centre, the norm. But there are many, many, many other worlds."

In Acts of Appearance, Gill collaborated with papier-mache artists in a village in Maharashtra. For the Bohada festival, sculptors from the Adivasi communities of the Kokna and Warli tribes create extraordinary lacquered masks depicting the deities, which villagers wear in re-enactments of myths that last several nights. Struck by how removed such a visual universe was from their day-to-day challenges, she commissioned the artists to make masks of the animals and objects they treasured most, then photographed everyone wearing them.

The result is like a people's mythology. Animals are a natural and symbiotic part of the Adivasi universe. We see two women, one a clock face, the other a lizard, peering out of a bashed white van. Elsewhere, three people with the heads of a camel, a donkey and a goat sit cross-legged at a carrom board. A hare-headed girl crouches in a cotton tent. Although no glimpse is given of the people behind the masks, Gill feels in their debt. "You see the name Gauri Gill on these works," says the photographer, "but so many other people make them possible."

Gill loves how the mask series has taken on a life of its own. She recently stood in the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, during a major retrospective of her work, marvelling at the conviction with which some visitors, not knowing who she was, were explaining her photographs to others. With a laugh, she says: "They really seemed to own the work!"

The V&A Photography Centre, London, opens on Thursday

The Kumars at No 42

'I thought, "Do I really want to be playing someone three times my age with bad teeth?" But Sanjeev knew an old Indian woman can get away with saying the unsayable'



'Commissioners didn't get it' ... the Kumars with Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen

PHOTOGRAPHS: BRIAN RITCHIE/BBC

Sanjeev Bhaskar
Creator and actor

Just before Goodness Gracious Me started, I came up with a chatshow where a family interviews famous guests. It was partly inspired by me thinking, "I wonder if I'll meet anyone famous now I'm doing this?" - and partly by the time I introduced my university girlfriend to my parents. My dad said: "Pleased to meet you, how much does your father earn?" Then my mum stepped in with: "Welcome Janet. It's lovely to meet you ... Sanjeev has always been terrible at dealing with rejection." That was the first 30 seconds. I thought: "If I took someone famous home to meet my parents, it would be exactly the same."

It took a really long time to get the show going. Commissioners just didn't get it. But when it started, it was phenomenal. We deliberately didn't prep the guests, as we wanted them to be themselves. So much of the show was improvised and we just had no idea what the guests were going to say or do.

We had people like Cilla Black, Alan Alda, Donny Osmond, Ray Winstone, Richard E Grant - it was a joy. When we had Tom Jones on, Meera, who was playing the granny, went over, hugged him, and decided she was going to just cling on - beyond the point of comfort. It was great seeing Tom not knowing what to do - would he prise her off? He ended up looking very awkward before going: "Everything all right down there?"

By the second or third series, we were Bafta-nominated. We won two International Emmies, a Peabody and a bronze Rose of Montreux. I do think it's a shame Meera didn't win something. She created one of the best comic characters on TV. When we were trying to convince Eddie Izzard to come on, he said: "The grandmother absolutely terrifies me!" So I pointed at Meera and he turns to her and says: "The grandmother absolutely terrifies me!" I had to say: "No, Meera IS the grandmother." He had no idea.

The show travelled around the world. It did well in America, Asia, South Africa, was huge in Australia and New Zealand. A few years ago, I did a Unicef trip and at Johannesburg airport a couple came up to me and said: "Excuse me, are you the guy from The Kumars?" That was extraordinary - it was years after!

Meera Syal
Actor

Initially, they didn't want me to play the granny. But they struggled to find Asian women in the right age group who could improvise. There was a bit of me that thought: "Do I really want to be playing someone three times my age?" But I thought the show sounded brilliant, and I love improvisation so much that it was a no-brainer.

I don't know if I'll ever be offered another part with so much creative freedom and joy. The shows had a structure, which you hung storylines on and improvised around. It was a bit like jazz - you have to know the melody so you can wander off it. We got so used to each others' rhythms, we developed an artistic telepathy. I could feel Sanj cueing something up and I thought: "I know where he wants me to go." I loved working like that.

Sanj had a clear idea for the granny. He very much wanted her to be the gobby, rebellious wildcard to push against that image everybody had of older women - especially older south Asian women. Also, he knew that an old Indian woman can get away with being flirty, or naughty, or saying the unsayable.

We really did try to push things as far as we could, but I think we got away with a lot because we we were never cruel to guests. We gave them an Indian family's idea of hospitality - to love them to death - and we were genuinely really excited to have them on the show. We got to meet our childhood heroes. Donny Osmond was a big moment for me. You don't ever expect to meet the person whose face you used to kiss on your bedroom wall. Even if it was as an 85-year-old woman with bad teeth.

The only downside was my back. I used to bend double to play her, and after the first few episodes, I said: "Guys, forget about me bending double for any of the rehearsals, because this is killing me." Also, during the series, me and Sanj became a couple in real life, and ended up having a child. I had to be very careful with all the bending when I was pregnant. I had regular massages to help.

Overall, I'm just so proud that we managed to lavish so many famous people with Punjabi hospitality, and I love that we got all these famous people to spill their guts in a really unusual way. It was wonderful.

Interviews by Alexi Duggins



Sisters Rosaline (Eve Best) and Becca (Jones)

Review Maryland, ITV

Suranne Jones shines again in a moving sibling drama

★★★★☆

Lucy Mangan



The ascendance of Suranne Jones from Coronation Street star to a creative force to be reckoned with over the last couple of decades has provided food for the soul as well as a feast of entertainment. Now the indefatigable Jones returns to the small screen (between the last series of Gentleman Jack and the second series of Vigil, arriving shortly) in the new ITV drama Maryland, directed by another former soap star, Susan Tully (Michelle Fowler, from the days when EastEnders was great in every way). Jones, who co-created Maryland with the writer Anne Marie O'Connor, co-stars with Eve Best, who is one of the many faces here (Hugh Quarshie and Dean Lennox Kelly foremost among them) who make you cry: "Oh my God - yes! Why is this person not on my television more?!"

Maryland opens like a thriller, with a dead body discovered on a lonely stretch of beach on the Isle of Man and, soon after that, a woman taking delivery of a large package of smuggled drugs. This is a slightly unfortunate misdirection because it is not a thriller at all, but a chamber piece about family dynamics, female identity and ways of finding freedom before it is too late. The period of expectation-adjustment is a waste, but once you get your eye in, it is a joy.

The body is that of Mary, the mother of Becca (Jones) and Rosaline (Best). They thought she was on holiday in Wales with her friend Maureen and are baffled as well as grief-stricken when they are given the news and have to fly to the island to begin the repatriation process. The sisters have grown apart over the years, as often happens with siblings. This is partly because they have gone down different paths: Becca married young and is now in the thick of family life with two teenagers and Rosaline is devoted to her career, though she keeps a toyboy around who is happy to be called on in her moments of leisure. It is also partly because of their childhood history, which is gradually revealed, and the effects that traumatic events can have. Again, it is not a thriller; we are talking about ordinary trauma, not murder or kidnapping or anything. But it is all the more affecting for that, as is the fact that the sisters clearly still love each other and that - like all of us - they have accreted stuff between them that needs clearing away.

Their mother's death acts as a catalyst for, and a distraction from, such an undertaking, as they come to realise that Mary had been leading a double life for years. Unbeknownst to her children, Mary was adopted. She tracked down her biological mother to the Isle of Man and so began her secret visits there. When Mary's mother died, she left her the house - which now passes to the girls - to be held in trust down the generations "for the betterment of the women in the family". It is filled with pictures of the girls growing up and of Mary with her circle of friends in the community. They include a lover, the elegant, erudite Peter (Quarshie), who could not be more different from her decidedly inelegant and inerudite husband (and the girls' father) Richard (George Costigan) back home, and Cathy - the woman we first saw thanking a man in a rowing boat for bringing her a boatful of marijuana. Cathy is played by Stockard Channing, who is a great actor but her wild energy is barely contained here and unbalances her scenes: it feels a bit like Elizabeth Taylor walking into a Rattigan play.

Maryland's greatest strength lies in the scenes between the sisters, as they bicker, laugh, cry, barrel through the revelations together in front of people, then fall apart when they are alone. Past and present tensions rise and fall, and their increasingly truthful and bitter arguments are beautifully written and performed - right down to the silences that succeed them. Because after you have said that day's piece, what are you going to do? Stop being sisters? Never speak again? It is not that kind of drama, it is not that kind of relationship, it is not that kind of history. Maryland confounds your expectations and is all the better, all the more credible and all the more moving for it.

What's On

Scan the QR code below to sign up for the What's On newsletter, our free TV email with the best reviews, news and exclusive writing direct to your inbox every Monday

Storyville: Inside Kabul
10pm, BBC Four



Raha and Marwa are two young women who, when the Taliban returned to power in Afghanistan in 2021, exchanged voice notes about their separate journeys. Raha stayed in Kabul where she was surrounded by violence, while Marwa left with her husband and found a refugee camp in Abu Dhabi. This beautifully animated documentary by Caroline Gillet and Denis Walgenwitz uses these voice notes to illustrate their experiences of the crisis.
Hollie Richardson

Waterloo Road
8pm, BBC One
The serviceable school drama continues, peppered with a host of former soap stars and material that - accordingly - feels somewhere between Grange Hill and Corrie. This week, troubled student Kelly-Jo seeks an important diagnosis, but her aunt Nicky (Kym Marsh) has other concerns for her welfare. **Hannah J Davies**

Love Your Garden
8pm, ITV
Yvonne Lawson has earned Alan Titchmarsh's green-fingered assistance, having dedicated her life to combating knife crime after her son's murder. The mission: transform her Enfield garden into a tranquil paradise. Additionally, Katie Rushworth explores the healing properties of nature. **Danielle De Wolfe**

Colin From Accounts
10pm, BBC Two
It's round two of Ashley's 30th birthday celebrations - and just when you thought they couldn't get any more excruciating, she introduces "boomer" Gordon to her awful group of millennial friends, who dare to order a glass of rosé at his brewery. The arrival of Ashley's ex is the icing on a soggy cake. **HR**

Perry Mason
10.05pm, Sky Atlantic
The 30s-set legal reboot continues its second run, with Matthew Rhys as our titular PI turned lawman. As conspiracy theories mount, unsavoury new evidence forces Perry to reconsider the Gallardos' version of events in the Brooks McCutcheon case - and to blow off some serious steam. **HJD**

Rain Dogs
10.40pm, BBC One
It's the finale of Cash Carraway's plucky comedy-drama and Costello has lost the book deal. Her well-meaning neighbour doesn't exactly offer comforting words: "Most books are shite anyway." As she continues on a downward spiral of booze and self-loathing, we're given an ending that heavily hints a second series is on the cards. **HR**

BBC One

6.0 **Breakfast** (T) **9.15** Rip Off Britain (T) **10.0** Frontline Fightback (T) **10.45** Defenders UK (T) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) (R) **1.0** News (T) **1.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.45** Doctors (T) **2.15** Money for Nothing (T) (R) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) **3.45** RHS Chelsea Flower Show (T) **4.30** The Repair Shop (T) (R) **5.15** Pointless (T) (R) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.30** EastEnders (T)

8.0 **Waterloo Road** (T) Kelly Jo makes a shocking revelation, causing problems for Nicky and her family, and Amy finds herself infatuated with a colleague.
9.0 **MasterChef** (T) The semi-finalists cook a feast for the trainers and first responders at Gloucestershire's Fire Service College.

10.0 **News** (T)
10.30 **Regional News** (T) Weather
10.40 **Rain Dogs** (T) Selby, Gloria and Lenny go on a road trip in search of Costello after a call from Iris. Last in the series.
11.05 **Matt Willis: Fighting Addiction** (T) (R)
12.05 **Question of Sport** (T) (R) **12.35** Weather for the Week Ahead (T) **12.40** News (T)

BBC Two

6.30 **Bargain Hunt** (T) (R) **7.15** Money for Nothing (T) (R) **8.0** Sign Zone: Coast to Coast Food Festival (T) (R) **8.30** Coastal Defenders (T) (R) **9.0** Nicky Campbell (T) **11.0** News (T) **12.15** Politics Live (T) **1.0** Impossible (T) (R) **1.45** Eggheads (T) (R) **2.15** Food Map of Britain (T) (R) **2.45** A Countryside Summer (T) (R) **3.15** Japan: Earth's Enchanted Islands (T) (R) **4.15** Interior Design Masters (T) (R) **5.15** Flog It! (T) (R) **6.0** House of Games (T) (R) **6.30** Great Coastal Railway Journeys (T) **7.0** Digging for Britain (T) (R)

8.0 **RHS Chelsea Flower Show** (T) The BBC gardening team present highlights of this year's gardens.
9.0 **Forensics: The Real CSI** (T) When an armed gang robs £300,000 worth of gold from a Birmingham jewellery store, police need to use forensic evidence to track down the gold.

10.0 **Colin from Accounts** (T) Ashley invites her party-loving friends to Echo Parks.
10.30 **Newsnight** (T) Weather
11.15 FILM **Vice** (2018) (T) Comic biopic of Dick Cheney, starring Christian Bale.
1.20 **Sign Zone** Murder in the Pacific (T) (R) **2.05** MasterChef (T) (R) **4.05** This Is BBC Two (T)

ITV1

6.0 **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Women (T) **1.30** News and Weather (T) **1.55** Local News and Weather (T) **2.0** Dickinson's Real Deal (T) (R) **3.0** Tenable (T) (R) **4.0** Tipping Point (T) **5.0** The Chase (T) **6.0** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** News and Weather (T) **7.30** Emmerdale (T)

8.0 **Love Your Garden** (T) In Enfield, the team transform a garden for Yvonne, a woman who has devoted her life to combating knife crime after the death of her son.
9.0 **Maryland** (T) Becca and Rosaline struggle to come to terms with the shocking revelations about their mother's past.

10.0 **News** (T) Weather
10.30 **Local News** (T) Weather
10.45 FILM **Fast & Furious 5** (Justin Lin, 2011) (T) Action adventure sequel, starring Vin Diesel and Dwayne Johnson.
12.55 **Shop: Ideal World 3.0** Maryland (T) (R) **3.50** Unwind With ITV (T) **5.05** Bling (T) (R)

Channel 4

6.05 **Countdown** (T) (R) **6.45** Cheers (T) (R) **7.35** The King of Queens (T) (R) **8.25** Frasier (T) (R) **9.55** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (T) (R) **10.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **11.55** News (T) **12.0** Steph's Packed Lunch (T) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** Sun, Sea and Selling Houses (T) (R) **4.0** A Place in the Sun (T) **5.0** Help! We Bought a Village (T) (R) **6.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **6.30** Hollyoaks (T) (R) **7.0** News (T)

8.0 **The Greatest Auction** (T) The bidders compete for two vintage Hermès handbags, a print by street artist Invader, a 1970s illuminated furniture shop sign and a skateboard designed by Virgil Abloh.
9.0 **Grand Designs: The Streets** (T) Tim from Bicester takes on a self-build project in Graven Hill.

10.0 **Depp v Heard** (T) The trial concludes. Last in the series.
11.05 **Gogglebox** (T) (R)
1.05 **My Name Is Reeva** (T) **2.0** The Lateish Show With Mo Gilligan (T) (R) **2.55** Travel Man: 48 Hours in Dublin (T) (R) **3.25** Kitchen Nightmares USA (T) (R) **4.15** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **5.10** Moneybags (T) (R)

Channel 5

6.0 **Milkshake! 9.15** Jeremy Vine (T) **11.15** Storm Huntley (T) **12.15** Alexis Conran (T) **1.40** News (T) **1.45** Home and Away (T) (R) **2.15** FILM My Daughter's Secret (Ken Friss, 2021) (T) **4.0** Paul Martin's Antiques Showdown (T) **5.0** News (T) **6.0** Eggheads (T) (R) **7.0** Jane McDonald: My Yorkshire (T) (R)

8.0 **The Yorkshire Vet** (T) Peter treats a farmer's labrador that is struggling to walk after cutting itself on a nail.
9.0 **Ben Fogle and the Buried City** (T) The presenter explores Montserrat's capital, Plymouth, which is now a volcanic ash-covered ghost town after a series of eruptions in the 1990s.

10.30 **The Man Who Took Shannon Matthews** (T) (R)
11.55 **Shoplifters & Scammers: At War With the Law** (T) (R)
1.0 **Teleshopping** (T) **3.0** The Yorkshire Vet (T) (R) **3.55** GPs: Behind Closed Doors (T) (R) **4.45** Wildlife SOS (T) (R) **5.10** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.30** Milkshake! Monkey's Amazing Adventures (T) (R)

BBC Four

7.0 **Railways: The Making of a Nation** (T) (R) The birth of commuting. **7.30** Fred Dibnah's Age of Steam (T) (R) The invention of the steam turbine.

8.0 **As Time Goes By** (T) (R) Lionel asks Jean on an all-expenses-paid cruise.
8.30 **Whatever Happened to the Likely Lads?** (T) (R) Terry tracks down some of his former girlfriends.
9.0 **Expedition Volcano** (T) (R) Part one of two. Documentary following scientists studying volcanos.

10.0 **Storyville: Inside Kabul** (T) Animation about the Taliban.
10.30 **Escape from Kabul Airport** (T) (R) The inside story.
11.45 **Britain and the Sea** (T) (R)
12.45 **Storyville: Welcome to Chechnya – The Gay Purge** (T) (R) **2.25** Railways: The Making of a Nation (T) (R) **2.55** The Fifteen Billion Pound Railway (T) (R)

Other channels

BBC Three

7.0pm Top Gear **8.0** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **8.30** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **9.0** The Apprentice Australia **10.10** The Young Offenders **10.45** The Young Offenders **11.15** I Kissed a Boy **12.05** I Kissed a Boy **12.45** Glow Up: Britain's Next Make-Up Star **1.45** The Young Offenders **2.20** The Young Offenders **2.50** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton **3.20** Meet the Khans: Big in Bolton

Dave

6.0am Teleshopping **7.10** Secrets of the Supercars **8.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **9.0** Cops on the Rock **10.0** Storage Hunters UK **10.30** Storage Hunters UK **11.0** Rick Stein's Road to Mexico **12.0** Special Ops: Crime Squad UK **1.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Top Gear **4.0** Secrets of the Supercars **5.0** Expedition With Steve Backshall **6.0** Taskmaster **7.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **7.35** Richard Osman's House of Games **8.20** Room 101 **9.0** Have I Got a Bit More News for You **10.0** QI XL **11.0** Meet the Richardsons **11.40** Would I Lie to You? **12.20** QI XL **1.20** Dave Gorman: Modern Life Is Goodish **2.30** Richard Osman's House of Games **3.0** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **3.25** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **4.0** Teleshopping

E4

6.0am Hollyoaks **6.30** Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **8.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **9.0** The Neighborhood **10.0** The Big Bang Theory **11.0** Modern Family **12.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.0** The Big Bang Theory **3.0** Modern Family **4.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.0** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** Hollyoaks **7.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.0** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **9.0** The Big Celebrity Detox **10.0** The Inbetweeners **10.35** The Inbetweeners **11.10** Naked Attraction **12.15** Naked Attraction **1.20** The Big Celebrity Detox **2.25** The Inbetweeners **2.50** The Inbetweeners **3.20** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **4.10** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **5.0** The Neighborhood

Film4

11.0am FILM The Wrong Box (1966) **1.10** FILM First Men in the Moon (1964) **3.15** FILM The Cockleshell Heroes (1955) **5.15** FILM The Guns of Fort Petticoat (1957) **6.55** FILM Sister Act (1992) **9.0** FILM Alien: Covenant (2017) **11.20** FILM The Craft: Legacy (2020) **1.10** FILM Joy (2015)

ITV2

6.0am World's Funniest Videos **6.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **7.0** Dress to Impress **8.0** One Tree Hill **9.0** Dawson's Creek **10.0** Secret Crush **11.0** Dress to Impress **12.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **1.0** Family Fortunes **2.0** Chuck **3.05** One Tree Hill **4.0** Dawson's Creek **5.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **6.0** Celebrity Catchphrase **7.0** Superstore **7.30** Superstore **8.0** Bob's Burgers **8.30** Bob's Burgers **9.0** Hell's Kitchen **10.0** Family Guy **10.35** Family Guy **11.0** Family Guy **11.30** American Dad! **12.0** American Dad! **12.30** Bob's Burgers **12.55** Bob's Burgers **1.25** Superstore **1.55** Superstore **2.20** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.50** Unwind With ITV **3.0** Teleshopping

Sky Max

6.0am Stargate SG-1 **8.0** Supergirl **9.0** Quantum Leap **10.0** The Flash **11.0** NCIS: New Orleans **12.0** NCIS: New Orleans **1.0** Hawaii Five-0 **2.0** MacGyver **3.0** Quantum Leap **4.0** Supergirl **5.0** The Flash **6.0** Stargate SG-1 **8.0** The Flash **9.0** Fantasy Island **10.0** Flintoff: Lord of the Fries **11.0** S.W.A.T **12.0** Brassic **1.0** The Force: North East **2.0** Road Wars **3.0** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** MacGyver **5.0** Highway Patrol

Sky Arts

6.0am Sir Simon Rattle: Beethoven Symphonies **7.30** Discovering Dance on Film **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **9.30** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **10.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** Discovering: Groucho Marx **12.0** The Sixties **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** The Art of Architecture **3.0** The Directors **4.0** Discovering: Jean Harlow **5.0** Tales of the Unexpected **5.30** Tales of the Unexpected **6.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **6.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.0** The Art of the Garden **8.0** Andrea Bocelli: The Journey **9.0** FILM Toni Morrison: The Pieces I Am (2019) **11.15** Art Traffickers: Treasures Stolen from the Tombs **12.15** Christian Hook: Painting the Invisible **1.30** Rendezvous With Marlene **3.40** Sky Arts Book Club **4.40** Auction: David Gilmour Special **5.10** Auction **5.35** Auction

Sky Atlantic

6.0am Fish Town **7.55** The Wire **10.05** True Blood **12.15** Game of Thrones **1.20** Ray Donovan **3.30** The Wire **5.45** True Blood **7.55** Game of Thrones **9.0** Gangs of London **10.05** Perry Mason **11.10** Treme **12.20** The Night Of **1.30** The L Word: Generation Q **2.30** Game of Thrones **3.35** In Treatment **4.05** Fish Town


Alien: Covenant, Film4

Radio

Radio 3

6.30am Breakfast **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: Ligeti (2/5) **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. Violinist Jennifer Pike joins sarod players Amaan Ali Bangash and Ayaan Ali Bangash to perform folk music from Bengal and Assam, plus JS Bach. (1/4) **2.0** Afternoon Concert. Leonidas Kavakos conducts the Danish National Symphony Orchestra in symphonies by Brahms and Haydn. **5.0** In Tune **7.0** Classical Mixtape **7.30** In Concert. Rachmaninov's Vespers is interwoven with African musical traditions in a performance from cellist Abel Selaocoe and the BBC Singers, conducted by Sofi Jeannin. **10.0** Free Thinking. John Gallagher looks at the Manchester Jewish Museum. **10.45** The Essay: Death in Trieste. Sean Williams explores the speed at which the trial was reported across Europe. (2/5) **11.0** Night Tracks **12.30** Through the Night

Radio 4

6.0am Today **8.31** (LW) Yesterday in Parliament **9.0** The Life Scientific. Prof Jim Al-Khalili talks to leading scientists. (1/6) **9.30** One to One (1/6) **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: The West. By Naoíse Mac Sweeney. (2/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour **11.0** Living With AI **11.30** Sound Towns. Investigating the origins of Fife's New Folk in East Neuk. (3/4) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** Call You and Yours **12.57** Weather **1.0** The World at One **1.45** Taking Issue With Shakespeare. Prof Emma Smith and Will Self discuss toxic masculinity and Hamlet. (2/5) **2.0** The Archers (R) **2.15** The Bully. Drama, by Zalie Burrow. (R) **3.0** The Kitchen Cabinet (R) **3.30** Costing the Earth. Steve Backshall investigates why becoming more energy efficient is so expensive. **4.0** Law in Action. With Joshua Rozenberg. (1/4) **4.30** Great Lives. A profile of German novelist Thoman Mann. (8/9) **5.0** PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **5.57** Weather **6.0** News **6.30** Olga Koch: OK Computer. The comedian explores the technological world. (1/4) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Front Row **8.0** File on 4 (R) **8.40** In Touch **9.0** All in the Mind (5/10) **9.30** The Life Scientific (R) **9.59** Weather **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime: The Making of Another Major Motion Picture Masterpiece (7/10) **11.0** The Confessional. With comic writer David Quantick. (6/6) (R) **11.30** Today in Parliament **12.0** News and Weather **12.30** Book of the Week: The West (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today **5.58** Tweet of the Day

Radio 4 Extra

6.0am Shadows in Bronze (5/6) **6.30** The Wolf Far Hence (2/6) **7.0** In My Mind's Eye (2/5) **7.15** Dead Cert (2/5) **7.30** North By Northamptonshire (5/6) **8.0** The Goon Show (19/26) **8.30** Flywheel, Shyster and Flywheel (3/6) **9.0** Who Goes There? (2/6) **9.30** Big Town All Stars (4/4) **10.0** The Prisoner (2/4) **11.0** Shadows in Bronze (5/6) **11.30** The Wolf Far Hence (2/6) **12.0** In My Mind's Eye (2/5) **12.15** Dead Cert (2/5) **12.30** North By Northamptonshire (5/6) **1.0** The Goon Show (19/26) **1.30** Flywheel, Shyster and Flywheel (3/6) **2.0** Who Goes There? (2/6) **2.30** Big Town All Stars (4/4) **3.0** The Prisoner (2/4) **4.0** Shadows in Bronze (5/6) **4.30** The Wolf Far Hence (2/6) **5.0** In My Mind's Eye (2/5) **5.15** Dead Cert (2/5) **5.30** North By Northamptonshire (5/6) **6.0** The Goon Show (19/26) **6.30** Flywheel, Shyster and Flywheel (3/6) **7.0** Who Goes There? (2/6) **7.30** Big Town All Stars (4/4) **8.0** Joan Collins: A Life in Lipstick (2/2) **9.0** Mastertapes (6/10) **9.30** Ruth Rendell Stories **9.45** The Shadow Over Innsmouth (12/15) **10.0** Comedy Club: Wosson Cornwall (4/4) **10.30** The Jason Byrne Show (6/6) **11.0** It Is Rocket Science (1/4) **11.15** Paperback Hell (1/6) **11.30** ElvenQuest (6/6) **12.0** The Prisoner (2/4) **1.0** Shadows in Bronze (5/6) **1.30** The Wolf Far Hence (2/6) **2.0** In My Mind's Eye (2/5) **2.15** Dead Cert (2/5) **2.30** North By Northamptonshire (5/6) **3.0** The Goon Show (19/26) **3.30** Flywheel, Shyster and Flywheel (3/6) **4.0** Who Goes There? (2/6) **4.30** Big Town All Stars (4/4) **5.0** The Prisoner (3/4)

Yesterday's solutions

Wordsearch

M	Y	F	N	I	A	R	G	W
R	W	D	R	A	U	G	H	T
S	E	I	N	D	S	O	E	B
I	R	T	N	T	B	N	S	O
O	B	E	T	A	N	E	U	D
I	L	E	R	I	N	I	H	Y
B	S	R	H	M	B	O	P	L
S	E	T	T	M	P	O	D	A
L	P	E	O	S	A	A	A	G
E	L	A	R	U	E	L	I	E
N	S	E	F	H	T	O	T	R

Solution no 16,549

C	O	C	O	N	U	T	B	U	T	T	E	R
O	■	H	■	E	■	H	■	N	■	H	■	O
M	O	O	■	A	M	E	R	I	C	A	N	O
I	■	O	■	P	■	S	■	T	■	M	■	S
C	O	C	K	T	A	I	L	■	W	E	S	T
■	■	H	■	I	■	S	■	B	■	S	■	E
C	L	O	U	D	Y	■	G	I	B	B	E	R
H	■	O	■	E	■	M	■	N	■	A	■	■
I	O	T	A	■	H	O	N	D	U	R	A	S
N	■	R	■	M	■	H	■	W	■	R	■	E
O	N	A	V	E	R	A	G	E	■	I	C	E
O	■	I	■	N	■	W	■	E	■	E	■	D
K	E	N	T	U	C	K	Y	D	E	R	B	Y

Sudoku no 6071

5	1	8	2	7	4	6	9	3
9	4	2	1	6	3	7	8	5
3	6	7	8	5	9	4	2	1
2	8	1	5	4	7	3	6	9
4	3	9	6	8	2	5	1	7
7	5	6	9	3	1	2	4	8
8	9	5	7	2	6	1	3	4
6	7	4	3	1	8	9	5	2
1	2	3	4	9	5	8	7	6

Word wheel

UNDOUBTED

Suguru

1	3	1	4	1	3
2	5	2	3	2	5
4	1	4	1	4	1
3	2	3	2	3	2
1	4	1	5	1	4
2	3	2	4	2	3

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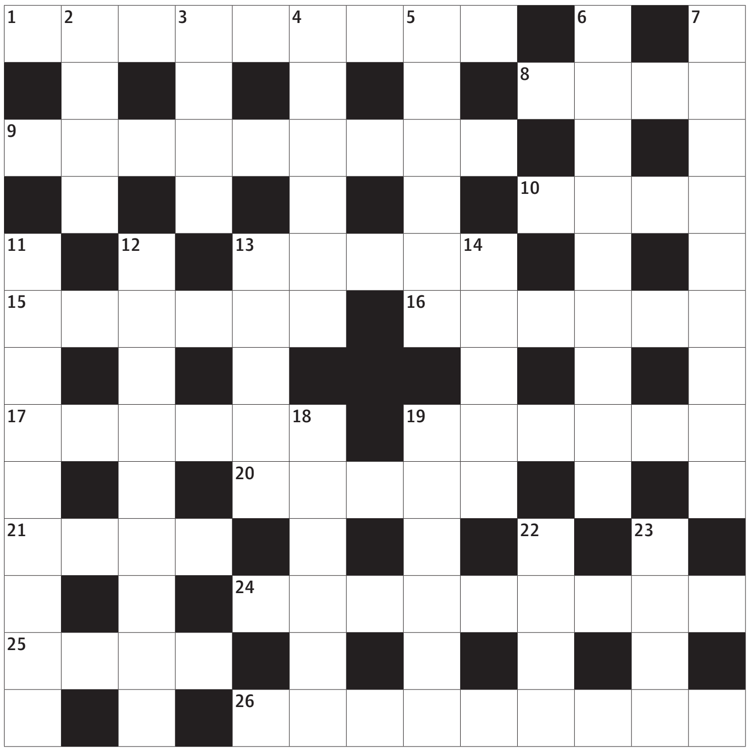
Quick crossword no 16,550

Across

1 Key used to delete the previous letter (9)
8 Flaming _ , Frederic Leighton's 1895 painting (4)
9 Promote (9)
10 Therefore (4)
13 Unemotional person (5)
15 Formula for making something (6)
16 Kind of incentive? (6)
17 Flat bread eaten at Passover (6)
19 Shuffling of a pack of cards (6)
20 Degree - grade (5)
21 River running from the North Pennines to the North Sea (4)
24 Stew (9)
25 Clare Smyth or Heston Blumenthal? (4)
26 Tiresomely, over and over again (2,7)

Down

2 Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (4)
3 German Baltic city, host each year to the world's largest sailing event (4)
4 Little (6)
5 Inconceivably big (6)
6 Skills needed to survive in a natural environment (9)
7 Single-room accommodation (9)
11 Cooked fowl's lower joint (9)
12 Widely distributed (9)
13 What things are wound around (5)
14 Raise trivial objections (5)
18 Foreshadow (6)
19 Body of water that Moses parted when leading the Israelites from Egypt to the Promised Land (3,3)
22 Guns (to be borne?) (4)
23 Kind of circus performer? (4)



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Sudoku no 6072

Medium. Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9. Printable version at theguardian.com/sudoku

								6
9		4						8
3	6		5				9	
	7		6		5		4	
						1		
	9		2		7		6	
8	5		1				2	
2		7						9
								5

Suguru

Fill the grid so that each square in an outlined block contains a digit. A block of two squares contains the digits 1 and 2, a block of three squares contains the digits 1, 2 and 3, and so on. No same digit appears in neighbouring squares, not even diagonally.

	3	5			
		2			4

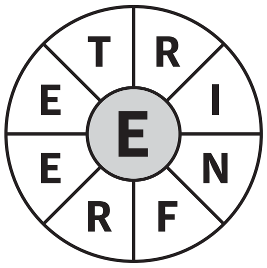
Wordsearch

Can you find 15 words associated with acting in the grid? Words can run forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally, but always in a straight, unbroken line.

E	H	S	E	U	C	C	G	T
L	G	B	B	O	O	K	E	X
Y	I	A	I	S	P	C	N	L
A	R	N	T	U	H	C	I	N
L	L	U	E	S	Y	A	P	R
P	M	K	O	S	R	S	R	I
E	A	N	T	E	O	T	O	A
M	H	I	R	I	M	A	P	L
G	X	N	T	E	E	A	S	R
E	N	E	C	S	M	A	C	I
N	E	O	P	R	O	M	P	T

Word wheel

Find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the central letter and at least two others. Letters may be used only once. You may not use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one nine-letter word to be found. TARGET: Excellent-47. Good-39. Average-29.



Trivia corner

Which footballer holds the record for scoring the fastest hat-trick in the Premier League?
a. Gabriel Agbonlahor
b. Jermain Defoe
c. Robbie Fowler
d. Sadio Mané
Answer top right

